



# TRAINING BULLETIN

Los Angeles Police Department

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## LYSERGIC ACID DIETHYLAMIDE (LSD)

Lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD), also known as LSD-25 and “acid,” is making a comeback on the streets of America. A dangerous hallucinogen, LSD is available in retail quantities in virtually every state. Lysergic acid diethylamide is classified under Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act, which includes drugs with no medical use and a high potential for abuse.

A potent mood changing chemical, LSD was originally produced from ergot, a fungus that grows on rye and other grains. Synthesized in 1938, the hallucinogenic effects of LSD were not discovered until 1943, when the Swiss chemist, Albert Hofmann, accidentally intoxicated himself with a small amount of the drug.

### Characteristics of LSD

Because LSD is manufactured almost exclusively in illicit laboratories, there is no standard for packaging, dosage levels, color, size, shape or form of the final product. Lysergic acid diethylamide in its pure form is a highly potent, odorless, tasteless, colorless crystal which is water-soluble and, except by chemical analysis, undetectable.

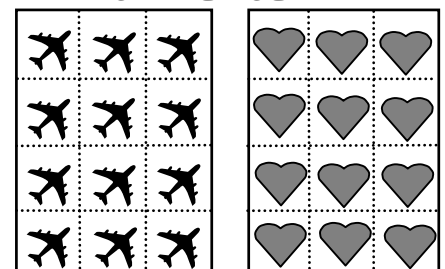
### Common Methods of Packaging

Pure LSD is so potent that an average dosage cannot be seen with the naked eye. Therefore, the drug is combined with other ingredients to obtain bulk for packaging. The ingredients with which the drug is combined contribute to the color, taste and odor. Lysergic acid diethylamide is also commonly packaged in small commercially manufactured vials of breath freshener.

Lysergic acid diethylamide can be soaked into any material, including stamps, loose-leaf paper and chewing gum. Especially popular forms include very small tablets of different colors, referred to as “microdots,” tiny gelatin squares known as “window panes,” and hard gelatin pieces, typically colored, that resemble small pieces of plastic.

Blotter paper is probably the most common method of sales and use. The paper is divided into quarter inch squares by a series of perforated lines, imprinted with a design and impregnated with LSD

### LSD PAPER DESIGNS



Airplane

Heart

by dipping it into a solution of pure LSD and distilled water. Once the LSD has dried on the paper, it cannot readily be seen by the naked eye. The paper is then torn along the perforations into quarter inch squares called "tabs," each tab contains enough LSD for a "dose." A typical 8 1/2" x 11" sheet of paper, the thickness of a business card, contains 1,000 tabs.

Due to LSD being sensitive to heat and sunlight, LSD will often be wrapped in tinfoil and stored in a refrigerator to prevent the chemical from breaking down. Lysergic acid diethylamide solution applied to sugar cubes or blotter paper decomposes in the course of weeks or a few months.

### **Methods of Use**

Generally LSD is taken orally, however injecting or inhaling LSD is also possible but is considered rare. The most common methods of use include placing a blotter paper tab or microdot under the user's tongue for thirty minutes and allowing the LSD to be absorbed through the mucous membranes into the blood. Lysergic acid diethylamide, can also be diluted in water and alcohol, can be dripped or sprayed into the eye or mixed with beverages. These methods are usually used at public events, such as concerts.

Other methods include placing a drop of liquid LSD from a breath freshener vial directly on the user's tongue or hand. When the LSD is put on the hand, the user will then lick the LSD off to absorb it orally. Additionally, a piece of the hard gelatin LSD may be broken off and dissolved in the user's mouth.

### **Effects**

The effects of LSD are unpredictable. As with all drugs, they depend on the purity and amount taken, the user's personality, mood, expectations and the surroundings in which the drug is used.

Physical effects of LSD include the following:

- Extremely dilated pupils
- Higher body temperature
- Increased heart/pulse rate
- Speech difficulty
- Lack of coordination
- Sleeplessness
- Tremors
- Increased blood pressure
- Sweating
- Piloerection (goose bumps)
- Loss of appetite
- Dry mouth

Acting primarily on the central nervous system, LSD affects all perceptive mechanisms. Sensations and feelings change much more dramatically than the physical signs. The user may feel several different emotions at once or swing rapidly from one emotion to another. If taken in a large enough dose, the drug produces delusions and visual hallucinations. The user's sense of time and self changes. Sensations may seem to "cross over," giving the user a perception of hearing colors and feeling sounds. These changes can be frightening and cause panic.

Lysergic acid diethylamide can mimic the signs and symptoms of mental disorders, such as psychosis. Many LSD users experience flashbacks, a recurrence of certain aspects of a person's drug experience without the user having taken the drug again. Flashbacks occur without warning, and usually within a month after LSD use. Although tolerance to LSD occurs rapidly, it does not cause physical dependence. Psychological dependence may develop after prolonged usage. The full effect of the drug is felt within 30 to 45 minutes after ingestion and lasts 6-12 hours. During a "trip," sleep is almost impossible.

Officers should use caution in the presence of individuals believed to be under the influence of LSD as their actions are unpredictable. Because LSD users are sensitive to light, avoid shining a light into a suspected user's eyes. Speak slowly and avoid speaking too loudly. A person believed to be under the influence of LSD should be approached slowly and calmly, handcuffed immediately and treated with the same care as a person with a mental illness.

Individuals who are under the influence of LSD and unable to care for themselves can be arrested for disorderly conduct, 647(f) of the Penal Code. Individuals suspected of driving under the influence of non-alcoholic drugs, including LSD, shall be evaluated by a Department Drug Recognition Expert, if available. Officers should be suspicious of all substances in the possession of a person under the influence of LSD.

**Officers are cautioned not to touch or taste** any substance suspected to be or contain a drug. Tasting is not an effective or approved method of detection for any drug. Extreme caution should be used when handling LSD, as it can be absorbed through the skin.

**This Bulletin cancels and supercedes Volume XXVIII, Issue 17, LSD, dated October 1996.**