

Drug interactions and risky mixes

Everyone's body responds differently. Things like your size, tolerance, mental state, any medications you're taking, and even how much you've eaten or slept that day can change how you react to a substance or a combination. What's in this table is based on general patterns – your experience may be different. That's why it's worth knowing your own body, going slow, and checking in with people you trust.

Mixing drugs is quite common, understanding the risks allows you to use them more safely.

Mix	What could happen	Way to keep it safer
Alcohol + GHB / Benzos	Very high overdose risk, slowed breathing, can lose consciousness rapidly	Avoid this combination. If you do use, have trusted people nearby who know what to do and where naloxone is.
Meth + GHB	Stimulant vs depressant, masked overdose	Start small, pace yourself, check in with friends
Cocaine + Alcohol	Creates cocaethylene (toxic to heart/liver)	Limit amounts, hydrate, don't binge both
Opioids + Alcohol / Benzos	Very high overdose risk	Carry/use naloxone, avoid combo completely
Steroids + Stimulants	High blood pressure, heart strain	Monitor health, avoid mixing pre-event
Viagra + Other stimulants (meth, cocaine)	Increased heart rate and blood pressure, heightened cardiovascular strain	Avoid combining, monitor how you feel, have a trusted person nearby

Information in this table has been adapted from the Alcohol and Drug Foundation (ADF). For more details, visit adf.org.au/reducing-risk/polydrug-use

We know that many people turn to peers and community members for advice about drug combinations, and that is a valuable and valid source of support. But if you would prefer to check interactions privately, without having to disclose your HIV status or your medications to anyone, there is a tool that can help.

The HIV Drug Interactions Checker (www.hiv-druginteractions.org/checker) is a free and easy to use resource that allows you to check how different drugs may interact with your HIV treatment (ART), or with each other. You can explore potential risks at your own pace and make more informed decisions about your health, without having to share anything you are not comfortable sharing. If you are unsure how to use it, you can always reach out to QPP and we can walk you through it together.

