



THE BODY'S RESPONSE TO

INHALANTS

Hi there! Mind Matters is a series that explores the ways that different drugs affect your brain, body, and life. In this issue, we are going to talk about inhalants.

What are inhalants?

Inhalants are chemicals that are found in everyday household products that some people use to get high. Because these items are found around the house, some people don't think that they can be dangerous. **But these chemicals can be very harmful to the brain.**

How do people use inhalants?

People who use inhalants breathe in the fumes through their nose or mouth. This is called "sniffing," "snorting," or "huffing." Because the high only lasts a few seconds or minutes, some people who use inhalants use them repeatedly to feel a longer high.

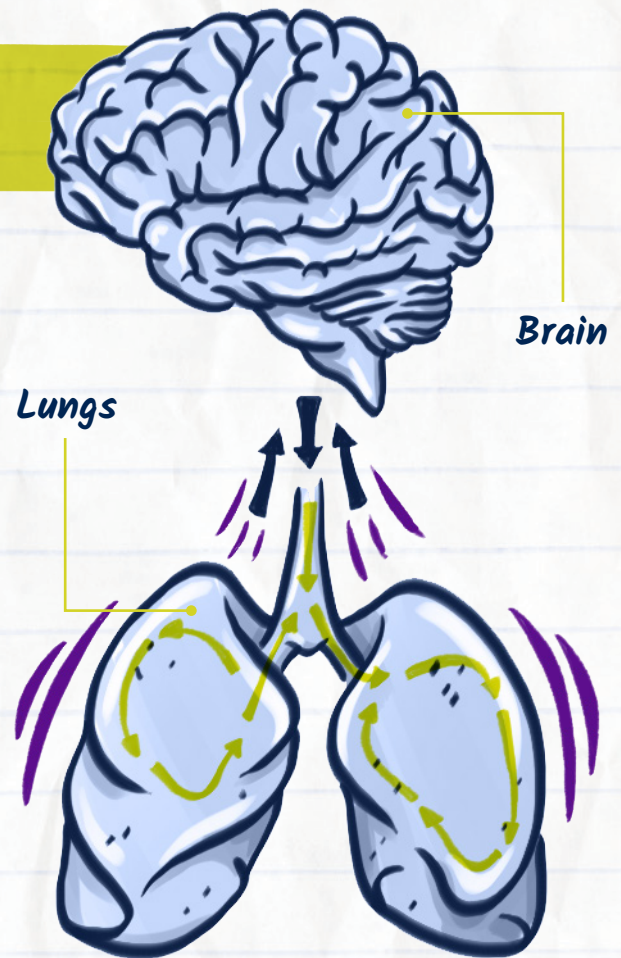
SOME PRODUCTS THAT PEOPLE INHALE:

- 1 Lighters
- 2 Nail polish remover
- 3 Felt-tip markers
- 4 Room fragrances
- 5 Spray paint
- 6 Paint thinner
- 7 Hair spray
- 8 Whipped cream cans
- 9 Cleaning products
- 10 Keyboard cleaner



How do inhalants work?

Inhalants can change the way your brain talks to other parts of the body, and may cause you to feel drunk or high. Many inhalants affect the brain in ways similar to depressants like tranquilizers, sedatives, or alcohol, although the effects are usually shorter-lasting. Other inhalants like nitrites can make your blood vessels larger and your heart beat faster. Nitrites are found in some room fragrances and medicines. This can cause you to feel very warm and jumpy.



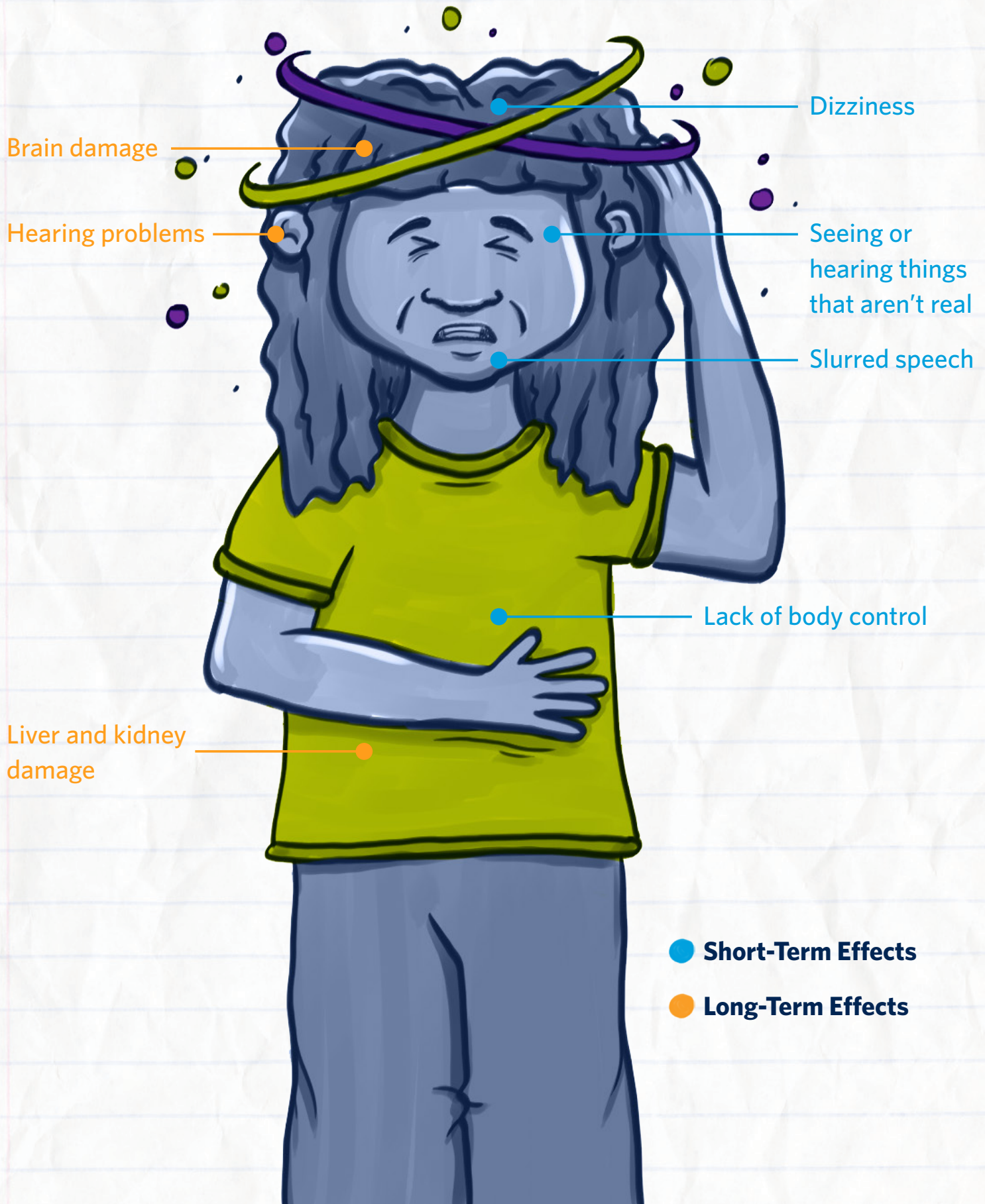
When inhaled, the chemicals go into the lungs. Within seconds, the chemicals reach the brain.

Can you become addicted to inhalants?

It is not very common, but **yes, you can** become addicted to inhalants. Over time, inhalants can change the way your brain works, and you can feel really sick when you are not using them. This can make it hard to stop using inhalants. **This is called an addiction.**

Don't forget that anyone can become addicted to inhalants. It doesn't matter where you live or how smart you are. There is no way to predict who will become addicted.

How do inhalants affect your brain and body?



Brain damage

Hearing problems

Liver and kidney damage

Dizziness

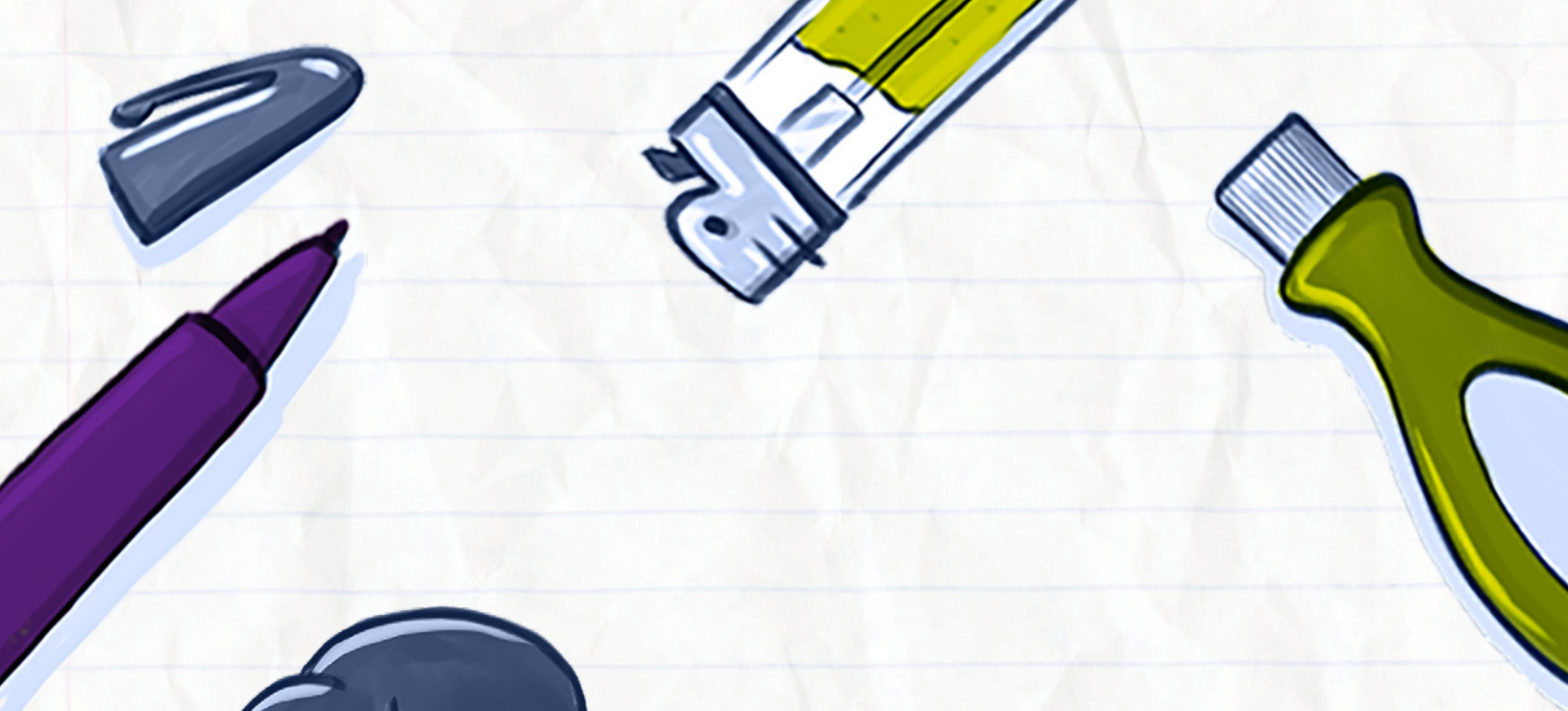
Seeing or hearing things that aren't real

Slurred speech

Lack of body control

● Short-Term Effects

● Long-Term Effects



What if someone I know needs help?

If you think a friend or family member has a problem with drugs, talk to an adult you trust — like a parent, coach, or teacher — right away. Remember, treatment is available and people can get better.

For more information, go to nida.nih.gov.



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