

**KNOW IT** Poppers is a term used for the group of chemicals known as alkyl nitrites.

Alkyl nitrites include: amyl nitrite, butyl nitrite and isobutyl nitrite. Often poppers are a mixture of these chemicals.

Poppers come as a clear or gold-coloured liquid in a small bottle or tube.

The vapour smells of old socks and is breathed in through the mouth or nose.

Poppers are known by trade names including Liquid Gold Rush, Ram, Stud, Thrust, TNT.

The drug is called 'poppers' because of the noise made by breaking open the thin glass capsule in which the medicine was originally supplied.

Use of poppers is popular on the gay scene.

**THE LAW** Amyl nitrite is a prescription-only medicine. Possession is not illegal, but supply can be an offence.

Butyl and iso-butyl nitrite are not medicines and the laws on possession and supply are complex.

Most poppers are a mixture of nitrites.

The information given here is general. If specific legal advice is required, please consult a solicitor.

**EFFECTS** Poppers make the heart beat faster and send a 'rush' of blood to the brain. This can make the user dizzy and unsteady on their feet.

Blood vessels dilate (enlarge) resulting in a flushed face and neck.

When inhaled the effects of poppers wear off after a few minutes.

### RISKS

Users often experience a headache afterwards.

Taking poppers can cause problems for people with anaemia, glaucoma and breathing or heart problems.

If spilled, poppers can burn the skin.

Regular use causes skin problems around the mouth and nose.

Inhaling produces a burning sensation in the nose.

Users can faint and lose consciousness, especially if they are dancing energetically.

Poppers **MAY BE FATAL** if swallowed. If the user swallows poppers s/he should be taken to hospital immediately. Do not try to make the user vomit.

Poppers are flammable so there is a risk of fire if they are spilt.