

Year 9 Knowledge Organizer 5 Religious attitudes to Drugs and Medical Ethics

Legal and illegal Drugs

Legal drugs include tobacco, alcohol, caffeine, prescription medicines e.g. codeine, methadone.

Illegal drugs include (class A) crack cocaine, cocaine, ecstasy (MDMA), heroin, LSD, magic mushrooms, methadone, methamphetamine (crystal meth), (Class B) amphetamines, barbiturates, cannabis, codeine and ketamine.

Drug abuse is when drugs are used in a way that they were not meant to be used.

Important Christian teachings on Drugs

- "God created mankind in His image"
- Christians believe in the Sanctity of life drug misuse causes health issues and sometimes death
- "Your body is a Temple in which God can be found"
- "Do to other people as you would want them to do to you"
- "Love your neighbour as yourself"
- The Bible says "Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to sin"

The dangers of Drug abuse

To the user:

Addiction, damage to organs and body tissues, mental health threat, stress on body systems e.g. heart, financial cost, risk to job and relationships through unusual and inappropriate behaviour, links to crime, risk of arrest and punishment.

To others:

other people maybe affected by user's erratic behaviour; user might be a threat to own and others' safety, e.g. drink driving or driving under the influence of drugs; causes social problems; crime.

Medical Ethics

We have the ability to perform amazing things medically but are all of them ethically desirable from a Christian point of view?

The first Commandment in the Bible is "Go and be fruitful" to have children. So using the advances in our medical ability couples who cannot have children naturally can use processes like INVITRO-FERTILIZATION where the sperm and the egg are fused outside the womb and once embryos are formed they are implanted into the mother.

Some Christians might object to this because multiple embryos are made and not all are used, the ones not used are disposed of. Those Christians who believe that life begins at conception believe that this goes against the Commandment "Thou shall not kill" Sometimes if multiple embryos are successfully implanted the mother might ask for some to be selectively aborted to prevent having several babies at a time. Christians are generally against abortion again for "thou shall not kill"

Organ Transplant

We are able to perform organ transplant including heart, lung, kidney and liver. Other transplants are more controversial such as hands and even face.

Arguments For

Organ transplants give people a chance of life. Some might agree that God has given surgeons the skills to perform such operations. Religions teach compassion so to give life using the organs of someone who has died is showing this. Also Jesus healed the sick so we should do the same. the

Arguments against

Other people argue that people should be buried whole. and that if they were put on life support a cure might be found rather than letting them die to use their organs. Also although people might accept some forms of transplants there should be a limit to what is used eg not using hands or faces.

Christians believe they should help those struggling with drug and alcohol abuse because Jesus taught to "Love your neighbour as yourself". One Christian organization which works to support those with drug abuse is the Salvation Army.



[Addiction services | The Salvation Army](#)

Other forms of medical practise such as the altering genes to prevent genetic disease have proved more controversial. In many cases this might allow for a child to be born without life shortening disabilities because of a hereditary genetic condition. However in the creating of an embryo without the genetic defects others will be destroyed. Also in getting rid of one condition such as sickle cell diseases in Afro-Caribbean children it removes their natural defence against catching Malaria the biggest child killer in Africa. Critics argue doctors are playing God and there may be unwanted consequences which we can't predict.