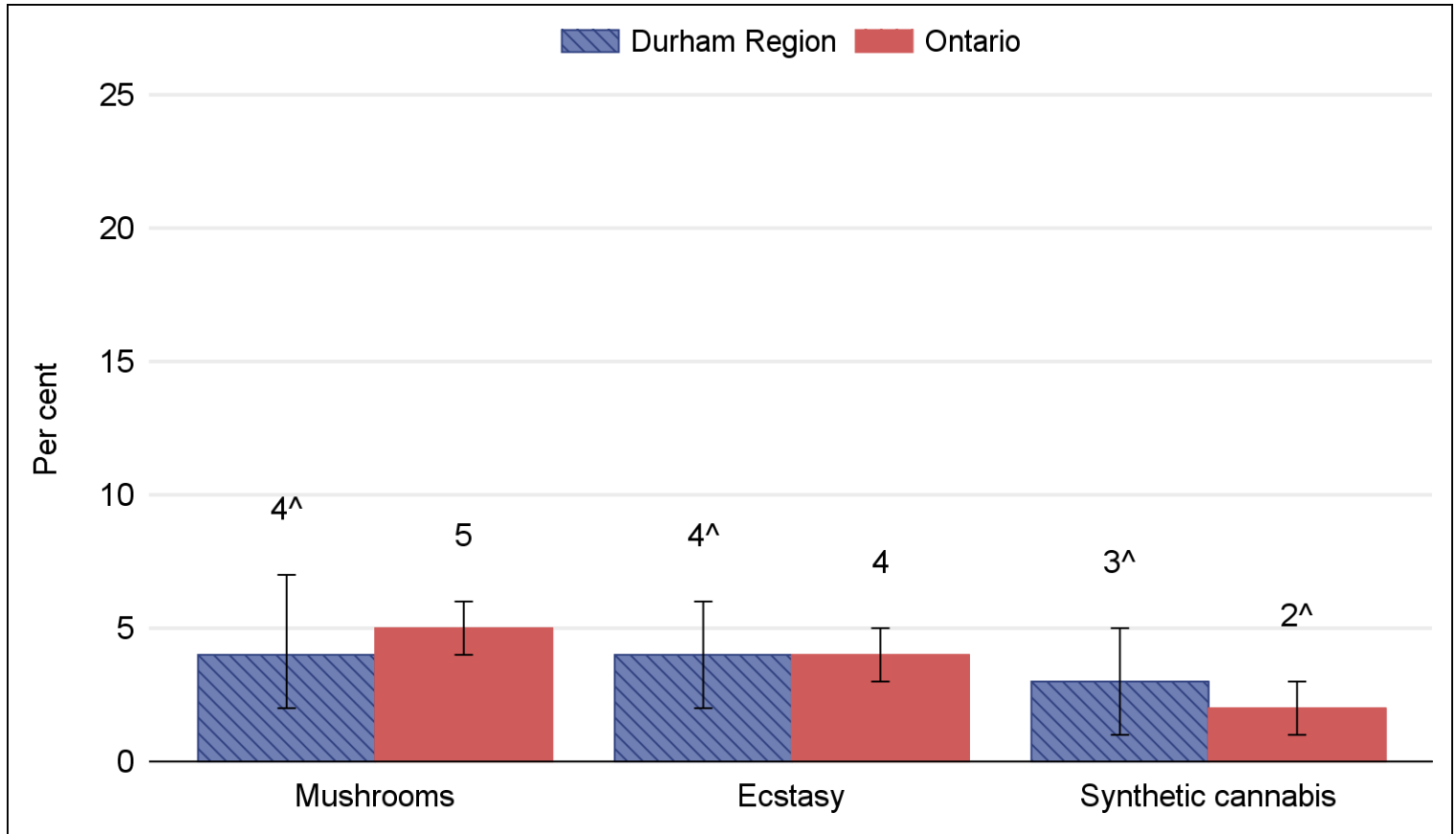


Quick facts:

# Percentage of secondary school students using illicit drugs in their lifetime, 2016-2017



Release date: May 2018



## Notes

Results were weighted and sex-by-grade adjusted to the Ontario 2014-2015 student enrollment.

Error bars represent the 95 per cent confidence intervals around the percentage. The true or actual percentage falls within the range of values, 95 out of 100 times.

<sup>^</sup> Interpret with caution as the coefficient of variation (CV) is between 16.6 and 33.3 per cent, inclusive.

NR - Unreliable and not releasable as the CV is greater than 33.3 per cent.

Source: Public Health Monitoring of Risk Factors in Ontario – Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Study (OSDUHS), 2016-17.

## Summary

Alcohol, cannabis, tobacco and non-medical use of prescription and over-the-counter drugs are the most commonly used drugs by secondary school students. Illicit drug use among students changes from year to year depending on availability and popularity. In 2017, mescaline (4%), ecstasy (4%) and synthetic cannabis (3%) were the most commonly reported illicit drugs used in their lifetime. Many of the estimates were too unreliable to report for Durham Region secondary school students. Provincial estimates for lifetime use ranged from 0.5% for heroin use to 5% for mescaline use.

## Questions

In the last 12 months, how often did you use the following? Response options: 1 or 2 times; 3 to 5 times; 6 to 9 times; 10 to 19 times; 20 to 39 times; 40 or more times; Used, but not in the last 12 months; Never used in lifetime; Don't know what this drug is

- Synthetic cannabis also known as spice
- Adrenochromes
- Mescaline also known as mushrooms
- LSD also known as acid
- Cocaine
- Crack
- Ecstasy also known as Molly or E
- Crystal methamphetamine also known as speed
- Heroin
- Fentanyl
- Jimson weed
- Mephedrone also known as bath salts

## Survey methods

The Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUHS) targets students, Grades 7 to 12, enrolled in the public and catholic regular school system. The OSDUHS uses a two-stage (school, class) stratified (region and school type) cluster sample design, and oversampling in PMO-participating public health units. The survey is self-administered in the classroom, taking, on average, 35 minutes to complete. Participation is voluntary and anonymous. Students, 17 years old and younger, absent or without signed consent forms on the day of the survey do not participate.

This survey excluded groups, such as street youth and dropouts, in which health behaviours such as healthy eating, physical activity, drug use, etc. may be underestimated. In addition, self-reporting may result in under-reporting whether from social desirability or recall bias. For a detailed description of the OSDUHS, visit the [CAMH website](#).

## Data analysis

Data were analyzed using SAS 9.4. For 2016-2017, the analysis was based on a design of 17 strata (7 geographical strata for elementary schools and 10 for secondary schools), 214 schools, 764 classes and 11,435 students. Variables accounting for the probability of selection, stratification and clustering were used when analyzing the data. The final sampling weight was based on each regional stratum's sex-by-grade structure according to the provincial population structure.

Differences in two percentages may be clinically important. However, when error bars overlap, the difference cannot necessarily be interpreted as real or statistically significant.

## Acknowledgement

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For more information, contact Durham Region Health Department at 1-800-841-2729, by fax at 905-666-6241 or by visiting the [Durham Region website](#).