

chips are less harsh on one's body than narcotics, they tend to be extremely addictive, to the point where users waste away their health and lives engaging in electronic fantasies. To revive their flagging sales in the face of this competition, drug cartels have responded with a wave of genengineered smart drugs and narcotics enhanced with the magical properties of Awakened flora.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Substance abuse, whether in the form of chips, drugs, or alcohol, is an accepted part of reality on the streets and in the corporate enclaves. Most are taken for recreational use and escapism, though mood-adjusters and performance enhancers see common use by corporate workers, athletes, and even shadowrunners looking to gain an edge. The risk of addiction is omnipresent, however, as well as the dangers of side effects and additional long-term debilitating effects that can outweigh the short-term enhancements.

Ultimately, substance abuse and addiction should be handled in roleplaying terms. A character's temptations and struggles to overcome an addiction should be integrated into the character's portrayal and actions. The gamemaster should allow the player to ultimately decide the character's choices and fate in these matters, but he should also of course supply opportunities for dramatic scenes and crises, such as being tempted by an old junkie friend, finding that old hidden stash, suddenly being unable to acquire a fix, finding the corpse of a friend who overdosed, or getting captured or jailed and forced to go cold turkey.

Characters may start the game with the Addiction negative quality (p. 80) or gain it through gameplay at the gamemaster's discretion. This is intended to allow the gamemaster to determine how common substance abuse is in his game, if it is even a factor to begin with. Basic information on drug types most commonly seen in the world of *Shadowrun*, including roleplaying advice for each, are provided below.

Addiction Tests

The gamemaster can choose on occasion to call for an Addiction Test to determine if a character gets hooked on a drug. Addiction Tests should not be called for each time a character uses a drug (unless it's something that is powerfully addictive), but should only be used after repeated/habitual use, a particularly brutal bender, or exposure to strong concentrations of the drug in a short period of time. The gamemaster can also do away with Addiction Tests and simply determine if, when, and at what severity a character acquires an addiction based upon the character's roleplaying actions.

Addiction can be physical, mental, or both. Mental dependence usually stems from the emotional gratification, euphoria, and escapism derived from use of a drug. Physical addiction results from the body's dependence on the substance for its continued "survival." Some drugs can confer both types of addiction, and are typically among the more difficult to kick (assuming the character even wants to).

Mental addiction should be resisted with a Willpower + Logic Test and physical addiction resisted with a Body +

