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Crack cocaine--a two-year follow-up of treated patients.

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OBJECTIVES: To investigate the 2-year outcome of the first 131 crack cocaine users who had been admitted for a period of inpatient treatment. **DESIGN:** Follow-up study of consecutive patients admitted between 1992 and 1994. **SETTING:** Inpatient detoxification unit of a public general hospital in Sao Paulo City, Brazil. **PARTICIPANTS:** 131 consecutive crack cocaine users. **MEASURES:** Reported crack use during last 12 months, incarceration and death. **FINDINGS:** After 2 years, 50 patients reported crack use in the last 12 months, 29 said that they had not used it during this period, 9 were in prison, 13 had died, 2 had disappeared and no information was available on 28. **CONCLUSIONS:** Crack cocaine use seems to be associated with a high mortality rate and criminal involvement but about one-third of patients give up using the drug within 2 years of inpatient treatment.

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