**Student, 21, who took ecstasy for the first time at a music festival died after suffering seizure**

* **Jessica Mary Hunter died on October 8, three days after she took the drug with friends at the Austin City Limits Music Festival**
* **She suffered a seizure, cardiac arrest and brain hemorrhaging**
* **Her parents, who have no other children, now hope to educate other students about their experiences and the dangers of the drug**

By [Lydia Warren for MailOnline](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/home/search.html?s=&authornamef=Lydia+Warren+for+MailOnline)

Published: 09:16 EST, 22 October 2014 | Updated: 11:14 EST, 22 October 2014



Loss: Jessica Mary Hunter passed away three days after taking ecstasy at an Austin music festival

A 21-year-old student has passed away after taking ecstasy for the first time at a music festival.

Jessica Mary Hunter, an only child from Fort Worth, Texas, died on October 8, three days after she took the drug with friends at the Austin City Limits Music Festival.

Her parents, Alan and Debbie, said they now hope to educate others on the dangers of the drug.

Friends said it was the first time Hunter, a Christian and marketing major at Texas State University in San Marcos, had ever taken ecstasy, the [**Fort Worth Star-Telegram**](http://www.star-telegram.com/2014/10/21/6219255/parents-struggling-with-daughters.html?rh=1) reported.

One of her friends made himself sick after taking the drug because he didn't 'feel right', but Hunter - who has always hated throwing up - did not, her parents said.

She suffered a seizure on the sidewalk and went into cardiac arrest. She turned gray, her body was rigid and her arms and legs were flailing, according to reports from the scene, [**Fox**](http://www.myfoxdfw.com/story/26763241/local-woman-dies-after-taking-drug-molly-at-acl-festival) reported.

Friends flagged down a passing police officer and paramedics performed CPR on her for eight minutes. She was rushed to Seton Medical Center Austin.

Her parents, Alan and Debbie Hunter, told the Star-Telegram that they were asleep when they heard the doorbell ring at 5am on October 6 and saw police lights flashing outside.



Loved: Jessica's parents Debbie and Alan, pictured, now hope to educate others on the dangers of the drug



Close: The couple, who have no other children, raced from their home in Fort Worth to Jessica's bedside in Austin after a police officer woke them up just hours after she suffered a seizure

'As soon as we saw them, we knew it was bad,' Mrs Hunter said.

They learned their daughter was in the hospital and they jumped in their car and headed towards Austin, arriving at the hospital a few hours later.

They were stunned to see their only daughter surrounded by medical staff and two chaplains.

She had been put into a coma as doctors attempted to keep her body temperature down, but she slowly deteriorated. Her parents said she was bleeding from her nose and mouth.



Taken: The couple, pictured with Jessica as a baby, said they will never understand why she took the drug



Loved: Mr Hunter hopes to make public service announcements about drugs at next year's music festival

**'A GAME OF RUSSIAN ROULETTE': WHAT ARE THE DANGERS?**

Ecstasy, which is also known as MDMA or Molly, is a synthetic, psychoactive drug that is similar to the stimulant amphetamine and the hallucinogen mescaline, according to the [**National Institute on Drug Abuse**](http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/mdma-ecstasy-or-molly).

After it is taken, it produces feelings of increased energy, euphoria, emotional warmth and empathy, and distortions in sensory and time perception. The effects last for between three and six hours.

But effects can also include increased heart rate, increased blood pressure and the inability to regulate the body's temperature, as well as cardiac arrhythmia, which can be deadly.

It can also be fatal if the person is taking other medications or if they have an undiagnosed heart problem, Dr. Terence McCarthy of Texas Health told the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

But deaths are also caused because the drug is unregulated and can be sold in a variety of make-ups and concentrations, he said.

'You never know if one capsule is 10 times more concentrated than another capsule,' McCarthy said. 'So it really is always a game of Russian roulette.'

MDMA users may also experience muscle tension, involuntary teeth clenching, nausea, blurred vision, faintness, and chills or sweating.

Then early on October 8, they learned that her brain had suffered hemorrhaging.

'Her eyes were open,' her mother said. 'You could see that there was nothing there.'

Her parents told staff to remove her life support and she passed away at 5.25am as her parents sat beside her in prayer, they said.

The toxicology reports on her death won't be available for several weeks.

Now her parents, who plan to spread awareness of the dangers of the drugs, said they will never know why their daughter decided to take the drug.

They plan on going to Keller High School, where their daughter had been a student, and share their experiences with seniors and college students. Mr Hunter also hopes to make public service announcements at next year's music festival.

'We are trying to get as much good out of this as we can,' he said.

'I want people to know that she was real. Maybe if they can make the connection. If we can just stop one from making the same choice.'

After her death, friends gathered at a park near to her school's Bobcat Stadium and released balloons in her memory.

'We want everyone to understand that it only takes one time,' her friend Maurah Ruiz told [**KEYE**](http://www.keyetv.com/news/features/top-stories/stories/friends-release-balloons-memory-jessica-hunter-21498.shtml).

'She was not a drug abuser. These people that sell you these things, they don't care. They don't care about you or your family or the people that you leave behind. All they care about is making money.'



Missed: Friends have remembered Jessica, a marketing major at Texas State, as popular and creative





Killed: Test results are still pending but doctors said the biggest danger of the drug is that it is often mixed with other substances that can cause a bad reaction. All of Jessica's friends reacted badly to the drug

Ecstasy, which is also known as MDMA or Molly, can be fatal if the person is taking other medications or if they have an undiagnosed heart problem, Dr. Terence McCarthy of Texas Health Harris Methodist Hospital Fort Worth told the Star-Telegram.

But more often, deaths are caused because the drug is unregulated and can be sold in a variety of make-ups and concentrations, he said.

'You never know if one capsule is 10 times more concentrated than another capsule,' McCarthy said. 'So it really is always a game of Russian roulette.'

He said that effects can include increased heart rate, increased blood pressure and the inability to regulate the body's temperature, as well as cardiac arrhythmia, which can be deadly.

Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2803369/student-21-died-taking-ecstasy-time-music-festival.html#ixzz3Gu3WzXg0>   
Follow us: [@MailOnline on Twitter](http://ec.tynt.com/b/rw?id=bBOTTqvd0r3Pooab7jrHcU&u=MailOnline) | [DailyMail on Facebook](http://ec.tynt.com/b/rf?id=bBOTTqvd0r3Pooab7jrHcU&u=DailyMail)