

INSPIRED

To Make Healthy Choices

Designer drugs are claiming too many young lives.

These versions of illegal drugs, slightly altered to avoid being classified as illegal, are synthetic or chemically made and mimic the effects of illegal drugs.

Synthetic marijuana tends to be a mixture of plants sprayed with laboratory-produced chemicals with similarities to THC, the mind-altering ingredient found in marijuana. It is often much stronger and more potent, may stay active in the body longer and has more toxic effects. Each sample may be different depending on how much "THC" got sprayed on that area, creating a great potential for an overdose. Synthetic marijuana has the appearance of dried leaves and is often sold in small, silvery plastic bags as "herbal incense," "herbal smoking blends" or "potpourri" and is usually labeled "not for human consumption." It is also advertised in liquid form for use in vaporizers.

Synthetic marijuana is known under many names, such as Spice and K2. It can be addictive and lead to withdrawal symptoms which include problems thinking clearly, neglecting other interests, cravings, nightmares, heavy sweating, nausea, tremors, headaches, extreme tiredness, insomnia, diarrhea and vomiting.

Bath Salts are another group of designer drugs with similar substances, chemically-made versions of a type of drug found in the Khat plant. Bath Salts are referred to as synthetic stimulants with the high similar to amphetamines, like ecstasy or cocaine.

They are often advertised as "plant food," "jewelry cleaner," "phone screen cleaner" and labeled "not for human consumption" to escape arrest by law enforcement. You may have heard of it as "Molly, Flakka, Bloom, Vanilla Sky or Zoom."

Bath Salts contain a varied mix of chemicals, so even if the packaging looks the same, one never knows what the product actually contains. It is usually sold in powdered form in small plastic or foil packages. It can be white, off-white, yellow or brown and may also be sold in capsules or tablets or in small jars in liquid form.

Some of the short term effects include uncontrollable craving for the drug, insomnia, false euphoria rapidly evolving into paranoia, nightmares, depression, self-harm and severe agitation. Many users also experienced violent, psychotic and life-threatening episodes after using "Bath Salts."

New designer drugs are continually being created, containing unidentified chemicals whose effects on the human body and mind are unknown.

These chemically engineered designer drugs are dangerous. Being aware of what they look like, keeping track of all online purchases and talking to teens and young adults about the potential dangers will prevent possible overdoses or toxic effects.

Know what to look for and talk about it before it becomes a problem or an addiction.

Synthetic drugs can cause violent and life threatening episodes.

Call 911 immediately if someone stops breathing, collapses or has a seizure.

Check out dea.gov/druginfo for more information.

The way synthetic marijuana is produced creates a great potential for overdose.

For more information:
Synthetic Designer Drugs
www.guideinc.org

