



Synthetic Drugs



WHAT ARE SYNTHETIC DRUGS?

Synthetic drugs are chemically laced substances similar to marijuana, cocaine and methamphetamine that are sold over the counter at some convenience stores, gas stations and tobacco shops.

Based on their chemical make-up, these drugs are commonly divided into two categories:

- ***Cannabinoids***
Popularly known as K2 or Spice, cannabinoids are chemically formulated versions of synthetic marijuana that consist of lab-manufactured THC.
- ***Cathinones***
Often known as “bath salts”, cathinones contain chemical compounds that mimic the effects of cocaine or meth.

Though the drugs’ packaging states the **products are not intended for human consumption**, their design, labeling and marketing clearly allude to the products being smoked and/or inhaled as a drug.

WHY ARE THEY SO DANGEROUS?

One reason that synthetic drugs are extremely dangerous is that buyers don’t know what chemicals they are ingesting. Individual products can contain a vast range of different chemical formulations and potencies, some of which can be ***two to 500 times stronger*** than THC.

WHY AREN’T THESE DRUGS ILLEGAL?

Although Maryland has implemented bans on specific formulas of synthetic marijuana and bath salts, drug makers can easily sidestep these regulations. Manufacturers adapt simply by replacing the chemical compound of a banned synthetic cannabinoid or cathinone with a newer formulation that is not yet known to authorities. This modification process poses increasing risk to its users, who are unaware of the reactions the new chemicals may cause.



Bath Salts



Frequently Asked Questions

“Bath Salts” are a designer drug that has recently become available. This is a powerful drug that causes severe side effects.

How are “bath salts” packaged?

Bath salts are sold as crystalline powder in a small bag with names such as Ivory Wave, Blow, Red Dove, Vanilla Sky, Aura, Zeus 2, Zoom, Bliss, Blue Silk, White Lightning, Ocean, Charge, White Dove and others.

What are the signs/symptoms of “bath salts” use?

- Severe paranoia
- Violent behavior
- Hallucinations
- Chest pain
- Seizures
- Decreased need for sleep
- Lack of appetite
- Self-mutilation



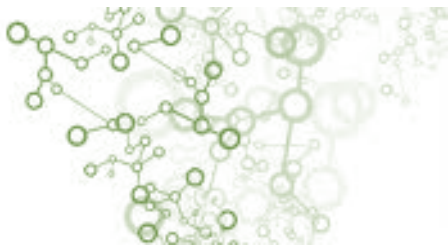
Users frequently describe the high as **“horrible”** and report seeing demons, monsters, foreign soldiers or aliens. Some have symptoms for 2-3 days. Some require long term psychiatric care because their symptoms don’t improve.

Are there long-term health problems that result from use of “bath salts”?

- Kidney failure
- Liver failure
- Increased risk of suicide
- Long term mental illness
- Self-mutilation
- Death

What do “bath salts” contain?

This product can contain one of many “designer drugs.” The mostly likely one currently used is MDPV (methylenedioxy pyrovalerone, but it could also contain mephedrone, a Khat derivative).



Herbal Incense

Fake Marijuana



DECEPTIVE PACKAGING

Because they are sold as incense, products like Spice, G-Four, K2 and Mojo don't have to list all of their ingredients. The ingredients that they don't list are **potentially dangerous and mind-altering!**

Spice, sold as "herbal smoking mixture", is clearly marked as **not for human consumption**. It can contain untested chemicals, with unknown toxicity, addiction potential, long-term effects and allergic reactions. In other words... **unknown danger**. The users have no way of knowing which of the experimental chemicals they are taking. Each batch can be different.

These herbal mixtures are not safer or less potent than marijuana. Users report greater:

- Anxiety
- Nausea
- Paranoia
- Discomfort
- Confusion
- Desire for the feeling to end

Both marijuana and these **synthetic chemicals negatively affect:**

- Short-term memory
- Motivation
- Reasoning ability
- Emotional stability
- Learning
- Stamina



THE BOTTOM LINE

The fact is that these herbal incenses and smoking mixtures are not herbal, not safe, and in some cases, not legal.

For more information call our Behavioral Health Outpatient Addictions Program at 301-759-5050.