Synthetic Drugs: K2 & “Bath Salts”

Ken Dickinson, M.S., R.Ph.
kdickinson@gaudenzia.org
610-291-3109
K2 Products
Herbal Incense

• Crushed non-psychoactive herbal plant matter treated with one or more synthetic cannabinoids
• Marketed as incense and “not for human consumption”
• No regulations to list ingredients or age requirements to purchase

  – First generation: “K2”, “Spice”, “Black Mamba”
Synthetic Marijuana (JWH- 018)

- Known as Spice or K2
- K2 originated at Clemson University, where researchers developed synthetic cannabinoids in an effort to create therapeutic drugs. But the cannabinoids also have effects akin to THC, the key ingredient in marijuana
- K2 is largely created by individual sellers, it's anyone's guess what else is added to the mix.
For $35, users can buy 3 grams of K2 "incense" with nothing more than a credit card or PayPal account.

Did not have drug test or it

Now do but extra expense and only some labs. Not everyone tested!

Smokable herbal blends marketed as "legal highs" have become increasingly popular and as easy to buy as cigarettes. (before 03.01.11)
K2 Spice

• K2 contains synthetic chemicals, known as JWH-018 and JWH-073, that mimic THC by acting on the cannabinoid receptors in the brain

• There are many, many unidentified & identified analogs
K2 Impact

• Retailers selling the drugs report a recent increase in sales from app. $1000 daily up to $10,000 daily.

• Medical reports indicate that K2/Spice drugs potentially result in users developing a rapid and powerful addiction on a level not usually found among smokers of “real” marijuana.

• Recently linked to over 352 nationwide emergency room incidents-includes suicide attempts, extremely elevated heart rate/blood pressure, comas, seizures, and anxiety attacks.
K2 Desired Effects

• Strong euphoria
  - Visual & perceptual distortions

• Laughter (uncontrollable some times)
  - Increased appreciation towards music
  - Brightening of colors
  - Some mild pain relief
  - Strong aural hallucinations (HIGH doses)
    – Amplifies effects of other
K2 Effects

- Dry mouth
- Drowsiness
- Bloodshot eyes
- Dilated pupils
K2 Side Effects

- Strong dysphoria
  - Panic attacks
  - Heavy body load
  - Extreme nausea
  - Fear, Panic, Anxiety
  - Strong aural hallucinations (HIGH doses)
  -- Racing heart (higher doses)
K2 Products

K2 VARIETY PACK - ORDER NOW
ULTRA - SUMMIT - BLONDE - SEX - ORISHA - THAI DREAM - AMAZONIAN SHELTER

FIND YOUR FAVORITE - TRY THEM ALL
K2 Products
User Report #1

This is the worst experience I have ever had
The most angiogenic substance I have ever used
Nausea, vomiting, heart pounding like I am going to have a heart attack
Not sure if I just said that, thought it, or read it

Two hours later will never take this again
User Report #2

- Three individual hits from a small pipe
- Organic, no chemical odor or taste
- Five minutes feels like cannabis
- Ten minutes like an intense cannabis high
- More than three puffs might be too much
K2 & Bath Salts Testing

• Many labs have a test for the first generation JWH & Bath Salts chemicals
• Process for K2 urine results within 6 to 8 hours Mephedrone & MDPV a little longer
• Cost can be as low as $15 = K2 and $20 for Bath Salts
• Saliva and urine tests still unknown for second generation JWH’s & Bath Salts
Mephedrone Background

- Discovered 1929
- Rediscovered 2003 web site “The Hive”
- Was a replacement for Ecstasy
- Sold as “plant food” & later “bath salts”
- Manufactured in clandestine labs
- Methylenedioxypyrrvalerone (MDPV)
- Known as substituted cathinones
Mephedrone & MDPV

• They are sold over the internet, and on the street, in convenience stores, discount tobacco outlets, gas stations, pawnshops, tattoo parlors, and truck stops, among other locations. The various brands are sold in 50-milligram to 500-milligram packets. Prices range from $25 to $50 per 50-milligram packet
Mephedrone
(4-Methylmethcathinone)
Mephedrone & MDPV
Appearance

- Distinctive odor
  - Fishy
  - Vanilla
  - Stale urine
  - Bleach
  - Circuit boards
Mephedrone Effects

• Duration
  – Total 2 – 5 hours
  – Onset 15-45 minutes
  – Coming up 15 – 30 minutes
  – Plateau 15 – 30 minutes
  – Coming down 30 – 90 minutes
  – After effects 2 – 4 hours
Mephedrone Desired Effects

- Mental and physical stimulation
- Euphoria, mood lift
- Feelings of empathy, openness
- Increase in sociability, desire to talk with others
- Pleasurable rushing
- Sense of being sped up
Mephedrone General Effects

• General change in consciousness (as with most psychoactives)
• Decreased appetite
• Pupil dilation
• Unusual body sensations (facial flushing, chills, goosebumps, body energy)
• Change in body temperature regulation
• Sweating
• Increase in heart rate and blood pressure
Mephedrone Toxic Effects

- Strong desire to redose, craving to recapture initial euphoric rush
- Uncomfortable changes in body temperature (sweating/chills)
- Heart palpitations, sense of racing heart
- Impaired short term memory
- Insomnia
Mephedrone Toxic Effects

- Severe paranoia
- Psychosis
- Hypersexuality
- Aggression
- Hallucinations
- Anxiety and depression
- Seizures
Synthetic Cathinones Effects
Summary Sheet

- Aggression
- Agitation
- Breathing difficulty
- Bruxism (grinding teeth)
- Confusion
- Dizziness
- Extreme anxiety sometimes progressing to violent behavior
- Fits and delusions
- Hallucinations
- Headache
- Hypertension (high blood pressure)
- Increased alertness/awareness
- Increased body temperature, chills, sweating
- Insomnia
- Kidney pain
- Lack of appetite
- Liver failure
- Loss of bowel control
- Muscle spasms
- Muscle tenseness
- Vasoconstriction (narrowing of the blood vessels)
- Nausea, stomach cramps, and digestive problems
- Nosebleeds
- Psychotic delusions
- Pupil dilation
- Renal failure
- Rhabdomyolysis (release of muscle fiber contents [myoglobin] that could lead to kidney problems)
- Severe paranoia
- Suicidal thoughts
- Tachycardia (rapid heartbeat)
- Tinnitus
- Vasoconstriction (narrowing of the blood vessels)