



K2 or Spice The Facts about Synthetic Marijuana



What is synthetic (man-made) marijuana?

Plant-like material sprayed with chemicals that mimic THC, the active ingredient in marijuana. These chemicals may include: JWH-015, **-018**, -019, **-073**, **-200**, -398; HU-210, -211; **CP 47, 497** among others. “Spice” and “K2” are just two names for products marketed as incense. Other product names are Genie, Yucatan Fire, King Krypto, Mr. Nice Guy, K3, Red Magic, Blueberry Medication and Super Skunk.

How and why do people use synthetic marijuana?

It can be smoked as a drug or consumed as tea with the intention of getting high. Individuals seek a marijuana-like high, and because the active chemicals do not test positive on a THC drug test, it is viewed as a “legal” alternative. This appeals to probationers/parolees, military personnel and other individuals who undergo drug testing.

Is it illegal?

Yes. Connecticut passed regulations (Department of Consumer Protection - Section 21a-243-7) in early 2012 that make the sale of any product(s), containing the chemicals in bold italics above, illegal to possess or sell. In November 2010, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) began a process to ban these products on an emergency basis across the country. These substances are currently classified as a Schedule I drug both federally and in the state of Connecticut. It is also illegal in other states and military bases, with penalties similar to marijuana possession. Many herbal products are contaminated with impurities and there is no way to know all the ingredients put into these synthetics. Illegal or not, these products are not safe.

In 2011, over 7,000 calls to poison control centers have involved exposures to synthetic marijuana. Compare this number to 3,000 in 2010.

What are the dangers of using synthetic marijuana?

Many who have smoked the incense say it's not the mellow high that they expected. Symptoms may include: agitation (extreme nervousness), anxiety attacks, a fast heartbeat, increased blood pressure, tremors (shaking), vomiting, hallucinations and seizures. In addition to the drug effects, smoking incense can cause lung damage.

For more information or for medical assistance after contact with K2 or other synthetic marijuana, call the Connecticut Poison Control Center 24/7 at 1-800-222-1222.



Connecticut Poison Control Center

