

THE FACTS

About Drug Abuse

Spring 2018

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Synthetic Marijuana Kills 2 and Hospitalizes Dozens of Others With Severe Bleeding From the Eyes and Ears

Chicago officials are warning about a disturbing trend among users of "fake weed" (K2/Spice) that results in severe bleeding from places like the ears and eyes.

Despite the perception that synthetic cannabinoids are a safe and legal alternative to marijuana, many are illegal and can cause severe illness.



The recent outbreak in Illinois has been linked to 56 cases in which users experienced severe bleeding after using synthetic cannabinoids. Users were hospitalized (two died) after coughing up blood, and bleeding from their noses, eyes, ears and gums.

In the case of the recent Chicago outbreak, the drug was believed to be sold out of a Mini Mart and later tested positive for brodifacoum, a toxic chemical commonly used as rat poison.

between teens who use synthetic pot and a heightened risk for violent behavior, risky sex and abuse of other drugs.

Synthetic marijuana is created when chemicals are either sprayed on dried plant material to be smoked, or sold as liquids that can be inhaled in e-cigarettes and are often sold at convenience stores and gas stations.

Unfortunately, people don't realize how dangerous the drug is, and have no idea what type of chemicals they are ingesting and how they will react to them.

Schools and parents should educate teens about the risks involved in the so called "safer" alternative to marijuana. The recent cases of severe bleeding are evidence of the harm that synthetic cannabinoids can cause.

A Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study found there's also an association

DRUG STATISTICS

- ◆ 35.8 percent of 12th graders said that opioids were easily available to them.
- ◆ Among 12th graders, 6 percent report daily use of marijuana, which corresponds to about 1 in 16 high school seniors.

- 2017 Monitoring the Future Study

Dear Colleagues,

Its Sunday morning and I woke up early to write this letter to you for our Spring Edition of our School Newsletter. Having recently returned from the NCEA and NAIS Annual Conferences, my first thoughts focused on how blessed we are to have so many outstanding school leaders, teachers and other professionals readying our children for bright futures.



Dr. George Elder,
Vice President, Schools & Colleges

My moment of joy and optimism all too quickly changed as I read the stories on the web reflecting the huge challenges and obstacles that our children must face and overcome to get to those bright futures. With new drugs (legal and illegal), technology and the media vying for our young people's time and attention, it seems clear that there may never have been a more dangerous time in which to grow up.

Thanks to the power, breadth and accuracy of Psychemedics' science, our partner schools are reporting amazing success with their Drug Free School Programs. Most have eliminated all major drug related issues and positive drug results continue to decline. Many schools are "partnering" with parents by sending first year test results to parents only and alcohol results going only to parents every year. Those schools receive data so that drug use can be monitored, and policies and procedures adjusted as needed. More schools, public, private and faith based are joining us every day. We have partners on over 32 college campuses and counting. We must not fail to do everything in our power to protect our students from drug use, addiction and worse. Call me and lets save lives together.

Blessings
George

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America's next big drug problem lurks on the horizon

Excerpts below are from the March 9th article printed in the [Daily Chronicle](#)

Imagine it were possible to return to the time before opioid use soared in the U.S. – to the early 1990s, before so many doctors came to overprescribe Oxycontin, Vicodin and the like for every imaginable kind of pain; before millions became addicted; before prescription opioid users switched to heroin and deadly street fentanyl.

Back then, the crisis might have been nipped in the bud.

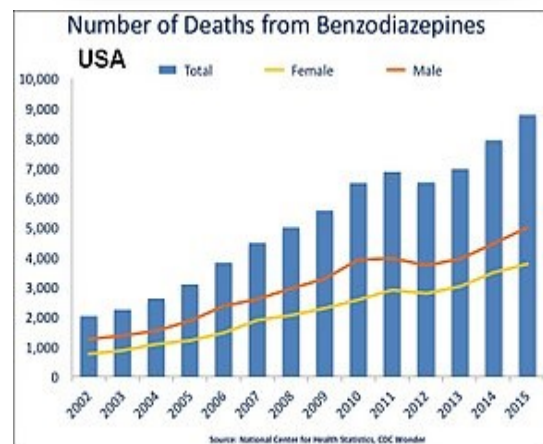
Today, the U.S. may stand at another such moment. Its next huge drug problem seems likely to be benzodiazepines. Better known as Xanax, Valium and Klonopin, they are tranquilizers used to treat anxiety and insomnia. In this century, the number of adults filling benzodiazepine prescriptions

has increased nearly 70 percent, and the quantities taken have tripled.

Like opioids, benzodiazepines also are purposely abused by some – to strengthen the kick of an opioid high or, on their own, to induce a stupor such as drunkenness.

To stop this epidemic in its tracks will take the kind of concerted push that has so far been lacking against opioids.

At the moment, Congress, the White House and the states all are considering stronger measures against opioids. That's overdue. On benzodiazepines, they should act now to avoid making the same mistake again – by including them in their current deliberations and taking steps to rein in this other epidemic before it gets any worse.



Teens are using liquid marijuana in e-cigarettes

There's no shortage of vape juices for e-cigarette smokers to choose from. But some young users opt to vape a different substance: liquid tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), a chemical compound of marijuana.

There is often a higher concentration of THC in its liquid form, sometimes called "THC oil" or "cannabis oil," than in traditional marijuana, which intensifies the high, according to the Drug Enforcement Administration.

Vaping marijuana is becoming popular among teenagers, according to Evesham Police Lt. Ronald Ritter.

"We're seeing more and more who use marijuana are doing it through vapes," Ritter said.

Highs from vaping liquid THC can last as long as six hours, Ritter said. He's heard of instances of teens getting seizures or going into convulsions after vaping the chemical, which is responsible for much of the marijuana's psychological effects like hallucinations, delusions and euphoria.

There are multiple online resources detailing how to use marijuana oil in e-cigarettes like JUULs, a popular brand of e-cigarettes among teenagers, as well as how-to videos. Liquid THC is also easier for teens to conceal in a vape pen and doesn't leave behind a mess.



Psychemedics the First to Develop Hair Tests for Synthetic Cannabinoids (K2, Spice) & Benzodiazepines (Xanax, Valium)

Psychemedics is pleased to announce the addition of two additional hair tests -- a Synthetic Cannabinoids test and a Benzodiazepines test. Psychemedics is the first laboratory in the world to develop and market a hair test for Synthetic Cannabinoids for the workplace, and the first and only hair testing laboratory to have its test for Benzodiazepines cleared by the FDA.

SYNTHETIC CANNABINOIDS TEST

This hair test looks for the compounds found in commonly abused products such as K2, Spice and Blaze. Synthetic Cannabinoids are often marketed as a "legal high" alternative to marijuana, and are commonly sold as incense in retail stores, head shops and on the internet. In response to reports of an alarming increase in abuse and overdoses, the Federal Government has classified many synthetic substances as Schedule I drugs under the U.S. Controlled Substances Act -- the same category as heroin and LSD.

BENZODIAZEPINES TEST

The FDA-cleared test detects numerous Benzodiazepines, including Xanax®, Valium®, and Ativan®, and is available as a stand-alone test or as an option on Psychemedics' standard drug panels. The abuse of prescription Benzodiazepines has grown at an alarming rate in the United States, contributing to thousands of emergency room visits and overdose deaths each year. It is important to note that Benzodiazepines can prove deadly when combined with other depressants, including alcohol. This significantly increases the danger of Benzodiazepine abuse.

As the scientific leader in drug testing, we at Psychemedics continue to advance the science and use our top flight scientific team and R&D resources to develop new tests that will deter people from abusing drugs. The development of these new tests provides the market with a unique and reliable test that identifies and measures the use of Benzodiazepines and Synthetic Cannabinoids over a period of time.

If you are interested in learning more about testing for Synthetic Cannabinoids and/or Benzodiazepines, please call our Client Services Department at 800-522-7424.

DID YOU KNOW??

People are now getting high on bug spray!

- ◆ **What is it?** KD is the street name for a substance like marijuana or tobacco that is laced with bug spray
- ◆ **Cost:** A bag costs about \$20 and comes with a 45-minute high
- ◆ **Symptoms:** Users fall into a zombie like state with slow lethargic movements. They have been found with their clothes off, eating grass and pulling dirt out of the ground and trying to put it in their mouth.
- ◆ **Use:** First responders say they are seeing an increase in overdoses on the dangerous mixture, and have responded to around 12 calls for overdoses on KD in a single day.



Source: <http://www.miamiherald.com/article206069839.html>

*Superior Detection
of Drug Abuse*

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Why Choose Psychemedics?

Psychemedics Corporation is the world's largest provider of hair testing for drugs of abuse and has been successfully operating for over 30 years. The Company serves schools and colleges around the world, and thousands of corporations, nationally and internationally, rely on the patented Psychemedics drug testing services. Psychemedics' clients include over 10% of the Fortune 500, many of the largest police departments both domestic and global, and six Federal Reserve Banks. Our team of experts stand ready to help through every step: policy development, communication, implementation and sustainability.

Since 1987, Psychemedics has offered the most effective hair testing technology, based upon scientifically validated drug testing methods. All hair testing is not the same – our patented technology uses a unique process to release the drugs trapped in the hair without destroying the drugs and removes virtually 100% of the drugs from the hair. Our patent is fundamental to hair analysis drug testing because if you cannot get all the drugs out of the hair, you cannot accurately measure them; and if you cannot accurately measure the drugs, you cannot identify all of the drug users. This patented technology provides superior detection of drugs of abuse, and is what sets us apart.

The Psychemedics web site is www.psychemedics.com