



POISON ANTIDOTE

Utah Poison Control Center

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1-800-222-1222

UNIVERSITY OF UTAH
COLLEGE OF PHARMACY


**POISON
Help**
1-800-222-1222



Fake Pot, Fake Cocaine: Very Real, Very Dangerous

One is marketed as “fake marijuana.” The other is advertised as “fake cocaine” or “fake meth.” Both were, initially, sold under the premise of being legal equivalents to illegal drugs.

But both are causing side effects that are generating a slew of calls to poison centers and spurring concern among doctors and clinicians at U.S. poison centers.

Poison centers first began taking calls about “synthetic marijuana” in late 2009. The substances sold for between \$30 and \$40 per three-gram bag, in packages labeled as incense or potpourri, and were marketed under brand names including “Spice,” “K2,” “Genie,” “Yucatan Fire,” “Sence,” “Smoke,” “Skunk” and “Zohai.”

Then, late last year, poison centers began to receive calls about products marketed as “bath salts” being sold both on the Internet as well as in gas stations and head shops. Packaging is usually a plastic bag filled with a white granular powder. The products are known by names including “Red Dove,” “Blue Silk,” “Zoom,” “Bloom,” “Cloud 9,” “Ocean Snow,” “Lunar Wave,” “Vanilla Sky,” “Ivory Wave,” “White Lightning,” “Scarface” and “Hurricane Charlie.” They produce increased heart rate, increased blood pressure, agitation, hallucinations, extreme paranoia and delusions. The psychosis seen in some users has led to hurting themselves and others.

In March, the U.S Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) temporarily made 5 of the chemicals found in “synthetic marijuana” illegal to possess. The temporary ruling was initiated to avoid an imminent hazard to public safety and is in effect for one year while further data are collected. Early in September the DEA announced the intent to place 3 of the key ingredients in “Bath Salts” temporarily illegal. This proposed rule is open for comment and will likely be enacted in the next month. It will also be in effect for one year. Although many of the chemicals in both “Spice “ and “Bath Salts” are now illegal in many states, including Utah, they may still be available under different names or with slightly modified ingredients.

A few tips on these products and the dangers surrounding them:

- Parents of teens should be on the lookout for such products in their children’s bedrooms and back packs. Be particularly skeptical of products labeled “incense” or “bath salts.”
- Be aware of the signs and symptoms of drug use in loved ones: paranoia, changes in personality, agitation and anxiety are among the symptoms reported by users of these substances.
- Talk with family members about the dangers of these products. They are not a “safe” or harmless alternative to other illicit drugs of abuse. Many can cause hallucinations and agitation that poison center officials say represents the opposite of a “mellow high.”
- Keep the poison control number near your phone: 1-800-222-1222.

Resource: AAPCC

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one day it may save a life!



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app at www.aapcc.org