

Raising Awareness Synthetic Drugs



The illicit use and abuse of synthetic drugs represents an emerging and ongoing public health threat in California. The fentanyl crisis specifically, has impacted communities across the state, leading to a sharp increase in fentanyl poisonings and deaths in recent years.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued a health alert in December 2020, because of an increase in synthetic opioids in the western United States.

A synthetic drug is a drug with properties and effects similar to a known hallucinogen or narcotic but having a slightly altered chemical structure, especially such a drug created in order to evade existing restrictions against illegal substances

Synthetic drugs include but are not limited to synthetic cannabinoids ("synthetic marijuana," "spice," "k2"), methamphetamines, bath salts, and fentanyl

Bath salt stimulant products are sold in powder form in small plastic or foil packages under various brand names. Mephedron is a fine white, off-white, or slightly yellow-

colored powder. It can also be found in tablet or capsule form. Bath salts are usually ingested by sniffing/snorting. They can also be taken orally, smoked, or put into a solution and injected into veins. Young people are using the white-powder as fake cocaine and many of them are ending up in emergency rooms and mental hospitals.

People who abuse these substances have reported agitation, insomnia, irritability, dizziness, depression, paranoia, delusions, suicidal thoughts, seizures, and panic attacks. Users have also reported effects including impaired perception of reality, reduced motor control, and decreased ability to think clearly.

Cathinone derivatives act as central nervous system stimulants causing rapid heart rate (which may lead to heart attacks and stroke), chest pains, nosebleeds, sweating, nausea, and vomiting.

Spice, K2 and several other products are a type of synthetic marijuana. The drug consists of plant material coated with synthetic chemicals meant to produce a high similar to marijuana. It is a toxic chemical that can be sprayed onto anything that burns. According to research presented at the American Psychiatric Association meeting, Spice can cause a lengthy bout of psychosis in some users. Symptoms include auditory and visual hallucinations, paranoid delusions, and thoughts of suicide.

The California Department of Public Health (“CDPH”), has expounded on the extreme danger of drugs laced with fentanyl. illicit fentanyl can be added to other drugs to make them cheaper, more powerful, and more addictive. illicit fentanyl has been found in many drugs, including heroin, methamphetamine, counterfeit pills, and cocaine. fentanyl mixed with any drug increases the likelihood of a fatal overdose. Furthermore, it is nearly impossible to tell if drugs have been laced with fentanyl without additional testing, because fentanyl cannot be seen, smelled, or tasted when used as a lacing agent.

Parent Resources Websites:

- [Fentanyl](#)
- [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#)
- <https://nida.nih.gov/research-topics/parents-educators>
- [Article: Education on fentanyl, other drugs often optional in California schools, if offered at all](#)
- [California Overdose Surveillance Dashboard](#)
- [CDC: Understanding the Opioid Overdose Epidemic](#)
- [Fentanyl Takes Friends \(sccgov.org\)](http://sccgov.org)
- [Song for Charlie \(Non-Profit Charity\)](#)
- [One Pill Can Kill \(dea.gov\)](http://dea.gov)
- [The Real Deal on Fentanyl - Get the Facts \(Ad Council\)](#)
- [Parents \(dropthebomb.com\)](http://dropthebomb.com) (Ad Council)
- [8 Tips for Talking to Your Teen about Alcohol and Other Drugs created by Safety First.](#)

Fentanyl Crisis Among CA Youth (CDPH Safe Schools for All)

<https://youtu.be/Vmb76t6CC3Q?si=UI2i8AuWD9SvVrxG>