



Synthetic Marijuana Fact Sheet

What is synthetic marijuana?

It is a dangerous mixture of plant materials and unregulated chemical compounds. The compounds are similar to THC, the active ingredient in marijuana, but have varying dangerous side effects. The compounds include JWH-018 and JWH-073.

What are some other names for it?

Spice, K2, Thunder, Genie, Posh, Herbal Incense, etc. There are dozens of names for fake marijuana.

What are the side effects?

The side effects can be very severe and include:

- Vomiting
- Elevated heart rate and blood pressure
- Anxiety
- Numbness and tingling
- Severe agitation
- Hallucinations
- Psychotic episodes

Is it dangerous?

It is dangerous, unpredictable, and addictive. It was originally created in the 1980s as a research tool but has never been tested on humans or approved by the FDA. It is 4 to 5 times more potent than regular THC. Locally in the Saratoga Springs, NY area, there are cases of kids using this substance and suffering very severe consequences, sometimes lasting for several weeks.

Is it legal?

Many of the chemical compounds used to create it were made illegal through an emergency ban by the Drug Enforcement Agency on March 1, 2011.

Where can I get more information?

For information on this or other related topics please contact:

The Prevention Council

36 Phila Street

Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

518-581-1230, or email maureen@preventioncouncil.org

Palm Beach, FL officials seek ban on synthetic marijuana

October 23, 2010 – So-called "synthetic marijuana" has left such a trail of emergency room visits and even deaths in its wake that 10 states have banned it, four more are trying to, and one local police officer is pleading with shopkeepers not to sell it until Florida lawmakers follow suit.

Pittsburgh, PA, boy, 13, dies after smoking synthetic pot

October 27, 2011 – A Pennsylvania eighth-grader who became ill after smoking synthetic marijuana and had a double lung transplant has died.

Tonya Rice tells the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review that her 13-year-old son, Brandon, died Thursday morning at Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh at UPMC.

The boy smoked the fake marijuana out of a plastic PEZ candy dispenser. The chemicals in the drugs caused extensive damage to his lungs. Brandon was put on a respirator in June 2011 and had a double lung transplant in September 2011.

Glens Falls, NY, thieves targeting 'herbal incense' in area break-ins

November 8, 2011 – Local police are investigating three burglaries in recent weeks where thieves targeted stores that sell "herbal incense," a trend that has grown as use of the product inexplicably continues to expand locally.

Police in Glens Falls, Queensbury and Fort Edward are all investigating burglaries at stores over the last month where herbal incense seemed to be the main target of the thieves.

The product, marketed under names like Wicked X, Posh and Black Mamba, is used by people who smoke it because chemicals in it give them a high.

Warnings on the package indicate it's not for human consumption, but its use has made countless local people ill and resulted in numerous trips to the Glens Falls Hospital emergency room.

"In the last couple of months, we've had at least two or three responses to the ER for people who had reactions to it," Fort Edward Police Chief Walt Sandford said.