

WARNING

K2 Back in the National Headlines Over the Summer



The U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued a [warning statement](#) on July 19, 2018 about serious health complications, mostly in the Midwest, caused by the use of K2 or Spice (synthetic cannabinoid products) laced with brodifacoum, which is a blood-thinning compound commonly used in rat poison.

It's been reported that hundreds of users of this synthetic drug have been treated for complications such as bleeding, and several people have died. It should be noted that brodifacoum remains in the body for weeks and may cause serious complications with bleeding weeks later. Those who use K2 and experience symptoms like easy bruising, bleeding gums, nosebleeds, internal bleeding and/or other bleeding problems should seek medical attention for possible consumption of brodifacoum.

In mid-August (2018), the Governor of Connecticut, along with the state Department of Public Health (DPH) and Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, issued a public warning statement about K2 as there were almost 100 reported cases of K2 overdoses within a 24 hour time period in the New Haven, CT area. Some of the individuals tested positive for fentanyl exposure but most did not so what chemical in the K2 individuals in the area used is still unknown.

Despite all of these facts and recent happenings, many believe that synthetic cannabinoids are safe and a legal alternative to marijuana, which is not the case.

I would like to review what K2 is and why it is harmful.

K2 or Spice is a mixture of herbs, spices or chopped up plant material that is sprayed with synthetic compounds that are chemically similar to THC, the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana.

K2 is typically sold in small, plastic bags of dried leaves and marketed as incense or potpourri that can be smoked. These products are generally sold in head shops and gas stations. It is also readily available for anyone to order and purchase online. And while law makers actively work on banning K2 in its most current form, the makers of the drug change the chemical compounds just enough to keep ahead of the laws.

K2 is generally smoked in joints or pipes, but is also known to be consumed as a tea. K2 is also sold in liquid form and used in vaping pens, vaping pipes and e-cigarettes.

Side effects associated with K2:

- Agitation
- Pale skin
- Seizures
- Vomiting
- Profuse sweating
- Uncontrolled/spastic body movements
- Elevated blood pressure, heart rate and palpitations
- Difficulty speaking
- Severe paranoia
- Delusions and hallucinations
- Death

The effects of K2 occur within minutes of use and last from one to eight hours.

For more information about synthetic cannabinoids:

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/synthetic-cannabinoids-k2spice>



<https://www.drugabuse.gov/drugs-abuse/emerging-trends-alerts>

www.chicagotribune.com/.../ct-met-synthetic-marijuana-problems-history-20180406

<https://abcnews.go.com/US/dead-100-severe-bleeding-synthetic-pot-illinois.../story>

<https://drugfree.org/drug/k2-spice-synthetic-marijuana>