

# Health Alert

# Cloud 9

## A Synthetic Drug

### What are Synthetic Drugs?

Synthetic drugs can take any form from powder to liquid and packages are often labeled "not for human consumption." Synthetic drugs are chemically laced substances similar to marijuana, cocaine and methamphetamine that are sold over the counter at some convenience stores, gas stations, tobacco and drug paraphernalia shops. Based on their chemical make-up, these drugs are commonly divided into two categories:

Cannabinoids known as K2 or Spice, (cannabinoids are chemically formulated versions of synthetic marijuana) contain compounds similar to AB-PINACA, AB-FUBINACA, and ADBICA or lab-manufactured THC.

Cathinones are often known as "bath salts", (cathinones contain chemical compounds that mimic the effects of cocaine or meth.)

The variety of brand names changes regularly to avoid detection, such as "Cloud 9," "Hookah Relax," "Relax," and "Crown."

### How Are They Abused?

Synthetic drug users can inhale, snort, inject, smoke, orally ingest or use rectally. The liquid form is used in electronic cigarette pens and hookahs.

If ingested orally, absorption is rapid with a peak "rush" at 1.5 hours, the effect lasting 3 to 4 hours, then a hard "crash". The total experience may last upwards of 8 hours. Synthetic drugs such as "Bath salts" are noted for producing a "high" similar to methamphetamine and have been called "legal cocaine".

### What are the Health Hazards?

Reports from emergency departments and poison control note that use can lead to sympathetic nervous system effects such as tachycardia (fast heart rate), hypertension (high blood pressure), seizures (convulsions), and vomiting. Long-term effects on humans are not fully known.

Altered mental status may present as hallucinations, aggression or violent behavior (including self-mutilation, suicide attempts and homicidal activity) and drowsiness.

### Addictive Potential

Synthetic drugs have been reported to have a powerful addictive potential, as well as the ability to induce tolerance (more of the drug is required over time to get an equivalent "high").

### For more information visit:

[www.drugfree.org/drug-guide/bath-salts](http://www.drugfree.org/drug-guide/bath-salts) OR [www.drugs.com/illicit/bath-salts.html](http://www.drugs.com/illicit/bath-salts.html)



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