

JUST THE FACTS

Synthetic Drugs

Synthetic drugs are created using chemicals that mimic the effects of other illegal drugs, or they're mixed with other substances. Some examples are synthetic marijuana, synthetic cocaine, Yobo, MDMA, and synthetic heroin.

Identification

Street Names: Fake Weed, K2 (refer to synthetic marijuana), Both Salts, Arctic Blast (refer to synthetic cocaine), Crazy Medicine, Nazi Speed (refer to YABA), Krokodil (refers to synthetic heroin)

What's It Look Like?

Because synthetic drugs are such a broad term for a wide array of drugs, synthetic drugs can look like a number of things - dried herbs or plants, white or tan-colored powders, brightly colored pills, or even liquids.

How's It Used?

Depending on the drug and the type of substance it is, synthetic drugs can be snorted, smoked, swallowed, or injected.

What's It Do?

Depending on the drug, a multitude of things could happen. Most of them cause hallucinations or paranoia, changes in body temperature, nausea, or even death.

Warning Signs of Abuse

New synthetic drugs are constantly being added to the market. A chemist can change up the formula a little bit to evade the law, so it's almost impossible to keep track of every single drug. However, you may look out for the following behaviors if you suspect synthetic drug use:

- Hallucination
- Suicidal tendencies or attempts
- Homicidal tendencies
- Aggression
- Paranoia
- Overheating

Facts About Synthetic Drugs

- To avoid suspicion, creators of synthetic drugs say their versions are safer than the "real" drugs and try to sell them online.
- You can't really be sure what you're getting because synthetic drugs are unregulated.
- Many synthetic drugs are so new that not enough long-term studies have been conducted to see what can happen to you after continual use.
- Some synthetic drugs can even be stronger than their natural equivalents.

Short-Term Effects

- Insomnia
- Hallucinations
- Passing out
- Nausea
- Paranoia
- Increased heart rate

Long-Term Effects

- Liver or kidney failure
- Seizures
- Strokes
- Decreased cognitive abilities
- More likely to engage in risky behaviors like having unprotected sex, which can lead to an unplanned pregnancy or STD, or driving under the influence, which can lead to serious jail time

Refusal Tips for Kids

It's not always easy for a kid to keep their cool in the face of peer pressure. Give them a few suggestions on how to say "No" like:

- "Nah man, that stuff makes you feel so sick."
- "Just because you were able to buy it online doesn't make it safe."
- "How do you even really know what you're taking?"

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