

MECCA SERVICES UPDATE:

Synthetic Marijuana

AKA: Spice, K2, Fake Weed, Bliss, Sexy, Black Mamba, MOJO, etc...



Synthetic marijuana has become prevalent in the past few years. Since this is a new drug that has constantly changing chemical compounds, we do not yet understand the full scope of how harmful it may be. This is a rising trend among teenagers that has caused many hospital emergency room visits across the nation and even death. Below you will find information on what is known about this dangerous substance.

What is Synthetic Marijuana? How is it Used?

Synthetic marijuana is a mixture of dried plant matter that is applied with a synthetic chemical compound, similar to THC, the active ingredient in marijuana. Chemicals used in synthetic marijuana change frequently as the government has outlawed certain chemicals. Manufacturing companies of these substances try to stay ahead of the law by changing the chemical compounds causing the substance to become less like THC and even more dangerous. Synthetic marijuana is typically smoked; teens may use rolling papers, pipes, bongs, or other methods to ingest this product.

How is Synthetic Marijuana Obtained? Is it Regulated?

Synthetic marijuana is sold in head shops, specialty shops, some convenience stores, and online. Prices can range from \$15-35 per packet. This product is marketed as a legal alternative to marijuana and is sold as incense or potpourri with each package labeled “not for human consumption.” Manufacturers of this product are not regulated and are often unknown since these products are purchased online whether wholesale or retail. Recent research in Iowa crime labs have shown that the contents of synthetic marijuana don’t always match what is listed on the label and two identical packages can have different contents.

Symptoms of Synthetic Marijuana Use

Hallucinations	Delusions
Paranoia	Panic Attacks
Non-Responsiveness	Agitation
Vomiting	Elevated Heart Rate
Elevated Blood Pressure	Anxiety
Numbness or Tingling	Pale Appearance
Tremors	Seizures

What are the Warning Signs of Synthetic Marijuana Abuse?

- Negative changes in school work-attendance or grades
- Increased secrecy about possession or activities
- Use of incense, air sprays or perfume to hide smoke
- Change in friends
- Increase in borrowing money
- Evidence of use: dried herb residue, ash, rolling papers, pipes, unknown incense/potpourri packets
- Eye drop bottles-to mask bloodshot eyes or dilated pupils

MECCA SERVICES at City High

If you have any concerns about your student or questions about drugs or alcohol you may contact City High MECCA Services Counselor, Mindy Koon, MS, NCC, by phone at 688-1040 ext. 4081 or email at mkoon@meccaia.com. All conversations are strictly confidential.

Tips to Keep Your Teen Safe from Synthetic Marijuana

- Check on your teen’s spending and where their money is going
- Monitor your teen’s physical and mental health
- Make sure your teen checks in with you when they arrive home so you can check for signs of use, such as odors on clothing, breath and hair
- Review websites your teen has visited and track any purchases made with a credit card

