



**DEA**  
Drug  
Enforcement  
Administration



## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT **K2/Spice**



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### **What is it?**

Synthetic cannabinoids, also known as K2 or Spice, are compounds created in laboratories and mimic delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the main ingredient in marijuana that produces the psychoactive effect.

**Street names:** Blaze, RedX Dawn, Paradise, Demon, Black Magic, K2, Spice, Mr. Nice Guy, Skunk, Serenity, Crazy Clown, and many others.

**How is it abused?** Spraying or mixing the synthetic cannabinoids on plant material provides a vehicle for the most common route of administration – smoking (using a pipe, a water pipe, or rolling drug-laced plant material in cigarette papers). In addition to the cannabinoids laced on plant material and sold as potpourri and incense, liquid cannabinoids have been designed to be vaporized through both disposable and reusable electronic cigarettes.

### **What is the effect of using Spice or K2?**

- Psychological effects include acute psychotic episodes, intense hallucinations, severe agitation, and disorganized thoughts.
- It can cause an increase in heart rate and blood pressure, unconsciousness, tremors, and seizures.
- Regular users of the drug may experience dependence and withdrawal.

## Did you know?

These substances have no accepted medical use in the United States and have been reported to produce adverse health effects. Currently, 26 substances are specifically listed as Schedule I substances under the Controlled Substances Act either through legislation or regulatory action. In addition, there are many other synthetic cannabinoids that meet the definition for “cannabimimetic agent” under the Controlled Substances Act and thus are Schedule I substances.

There are many synthetic cannabinoid substances that are being sold as “incense,” “potpourri,” and other products that are not controlled substances. However, synthetic cannabinoids may be subject to prosecution under the Controlled Substance Analogue Enforcement Act which allows non-controlled drugs to be treated as Schedule I controlled substances if certain criteria can be met. The DEA has successfully investigated and prosecuted individuals trafficking and selling these dangerous substances using the Controlled Substances Analogue Enforcement Act.

The American Association of Poison Control Centers reported 1,952 cases related to exposure to synthetic cannabinoids. This is a significant decrease from the 7,779 calls reported in 2015.

Use has declined recently and was rather modest in 2016. Annual prevalence levels were 2.7 percent, 3.3 percent, and 3.5 percent in 8th, 10th, and 12th grade, respectively.

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