



# What is K2?

CT has recently experienced a rise in K2 exposure throughout the State. “K2” or “Spice” is a form of synthetic marijuana. The Center on Addictions definition of Synthetic marijuana is a mixture of industrial chemicals intended to mimic the effects of THC, the naturally occurring active compound found in marijuana. The chemicals are sprayed on bits of dried plant material, packaged in colorful wrappers, nicknamed “poison packets,” and sold under the guise of potpourri and herbal incense in local convenience stores, smoke shops and even online. Synthetic marijuana use can lead to side effects like rapid heart rate, vomiting, agitation and hallucinations.

<https://www.centeronaddiction.org/the-buzz-blog/what-k2-and-why-it-dangerous>

An alarming concern is how to safeguard youth from accessing synthetic marijuana. One method is educating parents on the dangers associated with them. Although synthetic marijuana is often marketed to contain natural like ingredients, the label is missing the fact that these chemicals are similar to the natural cannabinoid found in marijuana, THC –but affects our brain receptors differently.

<https://spiceaddictionsupport.org/what-is-spice/>

Although studies have found synthetic marijuana to be dangerous it is even more harmful when compounded with additional substances. The one thing that is key to recognize is that when purchasing synthetic marijuana there is really no way to identify the actual chemicals that were used to produce the substance being purchased.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse has provided some helpful points to remember about K2/Spice <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/synthetic-cannabinoids-k2spice>

## Points to Remember

- Synthetic cannabinoids refer to a growing number of human-made mind-altering chemicals sprayed on dried, shredded plant material or vaporized to produce a high.
- Synthetic cannabinoids are sometimes misleadingly called "synthetic marijuana" (or "fake weed") because they act on the same brain cell receptors as THC
- The effects of synthetic cannabinoids can be unpredictable and severe or even life-threatening.
- The only parts of synthetic cannabinoid products that are "natural" are the dried plant materials. Chemical tests show that their active ingredients are human-made cannabinoid compounds.
- Synthetic cannabinoids can also cause serious mental and physical health problems including:
  - rapid heart rate
  - vomiting
  - violent behavior
  - suicidal thoughts
- Synthetic cannabinoids can be addictive.



Learn more about Synthetic Marijuana by clicking on

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/drugs-abuse/synthetic-cannabinoids-k2spice>