



Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services

NYS OASAS Update on Synthetic Cannabinoids 9/30/16

- Synthetic cannabinoids refer to man-made mind-altering chemicals that are sprayed on dried, shredded plant material so they can be smoked (herbal incense) or sold as liquids to be vaporized and inhaled in e-cigarettes and other devices (liquid incense).
- Visits to emergency departments in some areas of the state have been on the rise due to use of these substances with symptoms ranging from confusion, agitation, elevated heart rate, aggressive behavior, paranoia, psychotic episodes, respiratory depression, slow heart rate, vomiting, seizures, loss of consciousness or unresponsiveness. In some cases, a person's appearance after use is similar to an overdose. Symptoms can be short lived or prolonged. In some cases, first responders have reported that symptoms have dissipated by the time the person gets to an Emergency Department. This can make accurate diagnosis difficult and increases the importance of providing an adequate history to medical professionals.
- It is illegal in New York State to possess, sell, offer to sell, or manufacture synthetic cannabinoids. If you have information about the illegal distribution of these synthetic drugs or bath salts, call the NYS Governor's Synthetic Hotline at 1-888-997-2587. Reports can be made anonymously. New York will vigorously pursue all available civil, criminal, and administrative remedies against any business or business owner found to be manufacturing, possessing for sale or selling illegal synthetic drugs.
- Governor Andrew M. Cuomo has implemented aggressive enforcement actions to combat the illegal sale of K2 and other synthetic drugs. Per the Governor's direction the State Department of Health's Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement, in partnership with the New York State Police, has increased enforcement efforts in communities across the state to crack down on the illegal sale of K2. Governor Cuomo also has directed the State Liquor Authority and New York State Gaming Commission increase their oversight and enforcement efforts to revoke a store owner's liquor and NYS lottery licenses if they are found to be illegally selling K2 or other synthetics.
- The New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (NYS OASAS) has developed materials for public distribution on the dangers of synthetics and what to do if use or illegal sale is witnessed. Posters, palm cards, fact sheets, and supporting resources are available on the [Synthetics Spotlight webpage](#).



What can you do? We encourage you to share this important information to help raise awareness about these dangerous drugs.

Download a synthetics poster and fact sheet or order materials:

- [Synthetics Poster](#)
- [Synthetics Fact Sheet](#)
- [Order Form](#)

For additional information about opioids and heroin, visit the [NYS Combat Heroin website](#). It's going to take all of us. Let's come together to #CombatAddiction.