



“Bath Salts” Dangerous Products

"Bath Salts", the newest fad to hit the shelves (virtual and real), is the latest addition to a growing list of items that young people can obtain to get high. The synthetic powder is sold legally online and in drug paraphernalia stores under a variety of names, such as:

"Ivory Wave," "Purple Wave," "Red Dove," "Blue Silk," "Zoom,"
"Bloom," "Cloud Nine," "Ocean Snow," "Lunar Wave," "Vanilla
Sky," "White Lightning," "Scarface," "Hurricane Charlie"

Because these products are relatively new to the drug abuse scene, our knowledge about their precise chemical composition and short- and long-term effects is limited, yet the information we do have is worrisome and warrants a proactive stance to understand and minimize any potential dangers to the health of the public. These products often contain various amphetamine-like chemicals, such as:

- methylenedioxypropylamphetamine (MDPV)
- mephedrone
- pyrovalerone.

These drugs are typically administered orally, by inhalation, or by injection, with the worst outcomes apparently associated with snorting or intravenous administration. Mephedrone is of particular concern because, according to the United Kingdom experience, it presents a high risk for overdose. These chemicals act in the brain like stimulant drugs (indeed they are sometimes touted as cocaine substitutes); thus they present a high abuse and addiction liability. Consistent with this notion, these products have been reported to trigger intense cravings not unlike those experienced by methamphetamine users, and clinical reports from other countries appear to corroborate their addictiveness. They can also confer a high risk for other medical adverse effects. Some of these may be linked to the fact that, beyond their known psychoactive ingredients, the contents of "bath salts" are largely unknown, which makes the practice of abusing them, by any route, that much more dangerous.

Unfortunately, "bath salts" have already been linked to an alarming number of ER visits across the country. Doctors and clinicians at U.S. poison centers have indicated that ingesting or snorting "bath salts" containing synthetic stimulants can cause:

- chest pains
- increased blood pressure
- increased heart rate
- agitation
- hallucinations
- extreme paranoia
- delusions



Parents, teachers, and the public at large should be aware of the potential dangers associated with the use of these drugs.