Synthetic stimulants that are advertised as “bath salts” are often found in a number of retail stores. The chemicals in these bath salts are a synthetic derivative of cathinone, a central nervous system stimulant, which is an active chemical found naturally in the khat plant. Mephedrone and MDPV or 3,4 methylenedioxyprovalerone are two of the designer cathinones most commonly found in the bath salt products. These products can be purchased over the Internet, in head shops, and at convenience stores.

**Street Names:** Bliss, Cloud Nine, Ivory Wave, Blue Silk, Vanilla Sky, Red Dove, White Lightning, Stardust

**EFFECTS**

Cathinone derivatives act as central nervous system stimulants. Like other stimulants, rapid heart rate, chest pains, nosebleeds, sweating, nausea, and vomiting may occur. This increase in heart rate can lead to heart attacks, strokes, or even death. These products are usually marked with “not intended for human consumption,” yet many people ignore this warning. Any time that users put uncontrolled or unregulated substances into their bodies, the effects are unknown and can be dangerous.
INCIDENCE & PREVALENCE

Bath Salts use has been steadily increasing in the United States, especially among the youth population. The number of synthetic cathinone reports increased from a total of 34 in 2009 to 628 in 2010. From January through September 2011, there had already been 911 MDPV incidents alone reported in the Drug Enforcement Agency’s National Forensic Laboratory Information System (NFLIS) database. According to the DEA, 25% of reports of synthetic cathinones were from the Midwest. Indiana ranked 3rd in exposure calls to poison control Centers regarding bath salts in 2011.

Number of Bath Salt Incidents 2009-2011 (DEA)

LAW & CRIMINAL JUSTICE

The NFLIS indicates that federal, state, and local law enforcement officials encountered MDPV– bath salts in 34 states and in the District of Colombia since 2009. In April of 2011 the U.S. Senate passed Senate Bill 57 which makes possessing, dealing, manufacturing, or delivering a synthetic cannabinoid, or salvia equivalent to possessing, dealing in, manufacturing, or delivering marijuana, hash oil, or hashish. These synthetic stimulants are designated as Schedule I substances under the Controlled Substances Act. This Schedule I status is reserved for those substances with a high potential for abuse, no currently accepted medical use for treatment in the United States, and a lack of accepted safety for use of the drug under medical supervision.

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