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Alcohol and Other Drugs
Knowledge Centre



Synthetic Cannabis and other New Psychoactive Substances (NPS)

Presenter

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Thursday 13 February 2020

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Acknowledgement of Country

We would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land we are standing on today, the Whadjuk people of the Nyoongar nation, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.

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Outline

- What are NPS?
- What is synthetic cannabis?
- Epidemiology of synthetic cannabis and other NPS
- Clinical considerations

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What is in a name?

synthetics

Legal highs

research chemicals

herbal highs

Kronic

*Monkey
Dust*

Novel
psychoactive
substances

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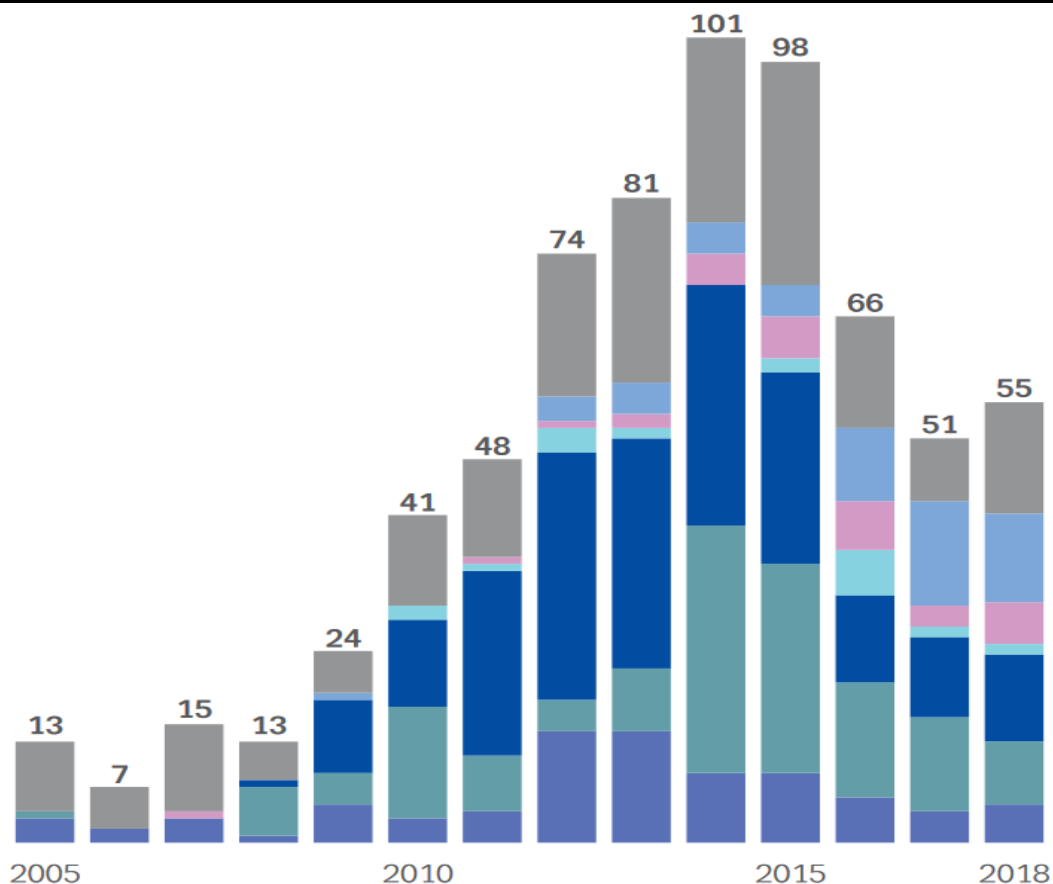
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- Other substances
- Opioids
- Benzodiazepines
- Arylcyclohexylamines
- Synthetic cannabinoids
- Cathinones
- Phenethylamines

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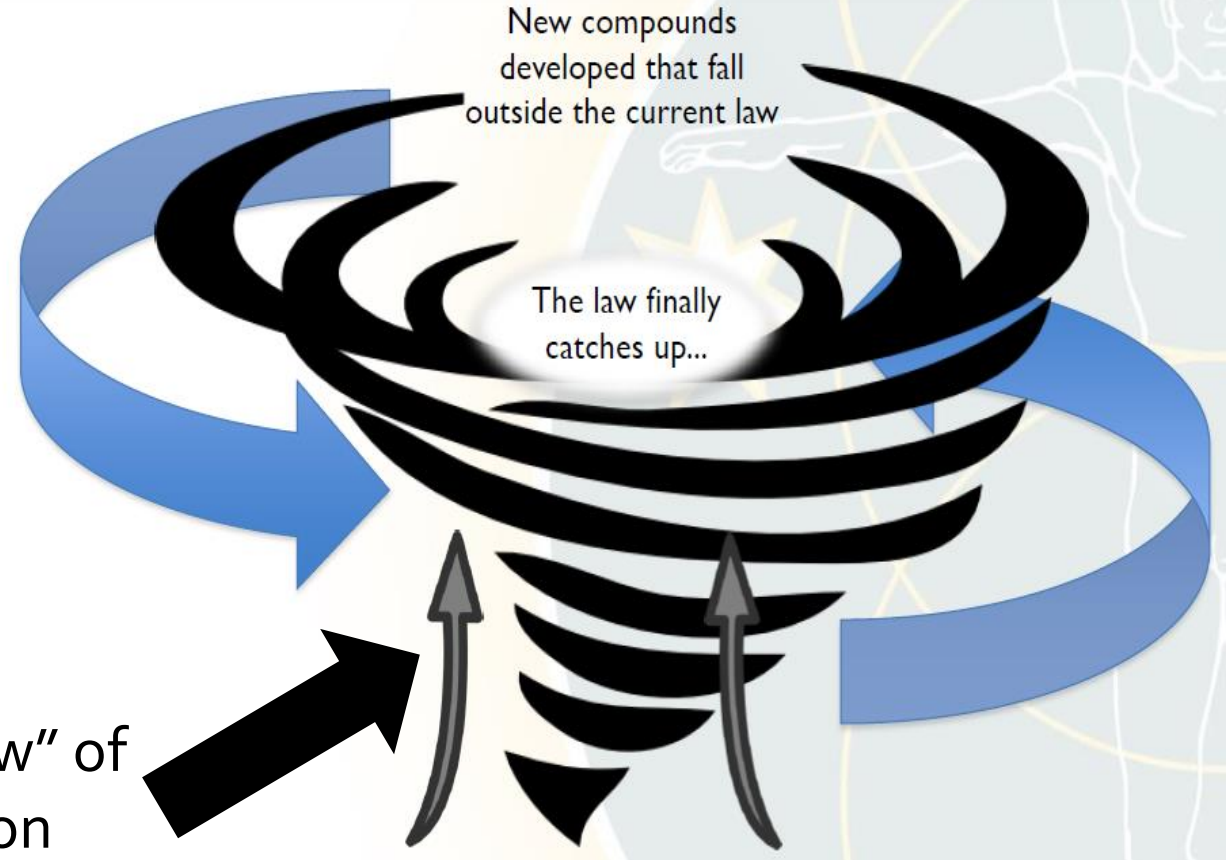


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How did we get here? (Caldicott, ND)

The "iron law" of
prohibition



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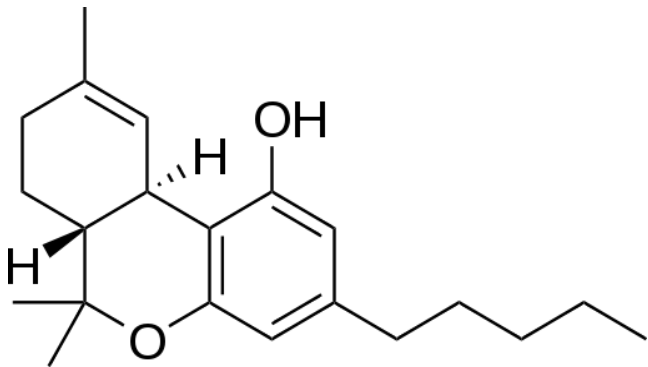
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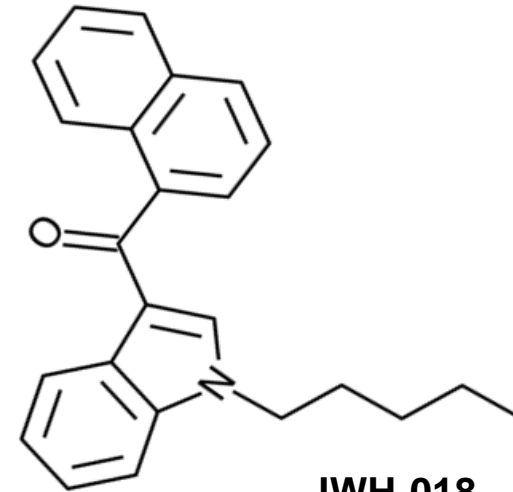


What is Synthetic Cannabis?

- Generally “inert” herbal product containing Synthetic Cannabinoid Receptor Agonists (SCRAs)



Δ 9-Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC)



JWH-018

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A Brief History of Synthetic Cannabis

- 2005: Spice emerged in the UK
- 2009: JWH-018 identified in Spice
- 2011: Kronic emerged as a drug of concern in Australia

(Produced in NZ)



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First Australian Legislative Action

In June, 2011, the WA government banned 7 synthetic cannabinoid agonists:

- JWH-018
- JWH-073
- JWH-122
- JWH-200
- JWH-250
- CP 47,497
- The C8 Homologue of CP 47,497



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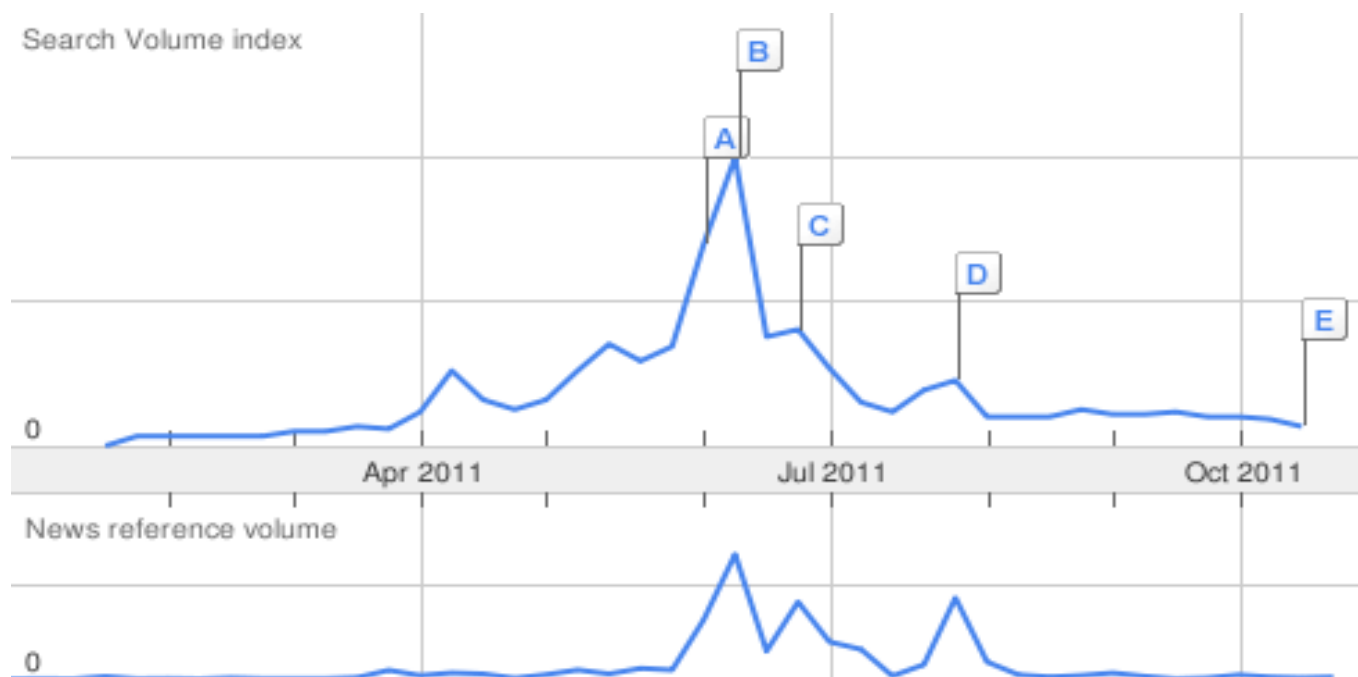


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Google Searches to buy Kronic (Bright et al, 2013)



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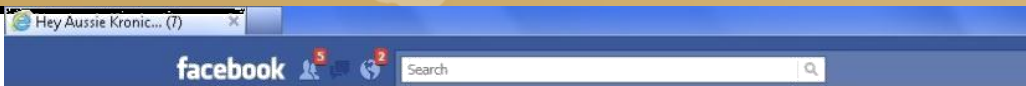
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Kronic's Profile



Kronic

Hey Aussie Kronic fans - nothing dodgy going on... we only found out about the ban today so just clearing out the last of our stock. It has to be gone by 2morrow close of business so we have 2 options... give heaps away for free or just dispose of it tomorrow. I know what we'd prefer! Up2 you if you want to order & take the chance.

BUY 1 GET 1 FREE ON ALL PRODUCTS PLUS SHIT LOADS OF FREEBIES WITH ALL ORDERS! :D

about an hour ago · Share

- 19 people like this.
- View previous comments 50 of 62
- Because Aus represents a huge chunk of the market, and also it could get banned at any time in NZ, these governments are unpredictable.
about an hour ago
- I want some, no money but ive already bought heaps from yas so give me it for free
about an hour ago
- want freebies how how
about an hour ago
- that ban is legit bullshit.
about an hour ago
- how do i buy it to australia?
about an hour ago
- get the goodies going now please
about an hour ago
- It's maybe coming from the Australian warehouse?
about an hour ago · 👍 1 person
- Aussie orders were always sent from australia other wise you woulda had to pay for the gamma ray treatment so they are clearing the aussie warehouse

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ABC News

Perth police close down kronic parties

Posted June 17, 2011 12:25:00

Police have defended their decision to stop two Perth venues from hosting parties for users of the synthetic cannabis kronic overnight.

Kronic users were planning to gather at the The Bakery in Northbridge before the State Government's ban on kronic came into effect at midnight.

However, police shut down the venue just hours before the event was due to start.

A second event was then organised at a hotel in Inglewood but this was also cancelled after police intervention.

Assistant Police Commissioner Michelle Fyfe has told the ABC's morning program that police have a responsibility to ensure public safety.

"So it [the party] was about encouraging people to come along and binge smoke and drink," she said.

"We have enforcement responsibilities under the Liquor [ews/2011-10-07/diane-cilento-passes-away/3353512](http://www.abc.net.au/news/2011-10-07/diane-cilento-passes-away/3353512) m within

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- ▶ [Black Label Killer Mix](#)
- ▶ [LEGAL IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA](#)
- ▶ [The Pleasure](#)
- ▶ [CP47,497 Blend](#)
- ▶ [K2 -Melon](#)
- ▶ [Blue Dawn](#)
- ▶ [Choc Cannabliss](#)
- ▶ [Hash Balls](#)

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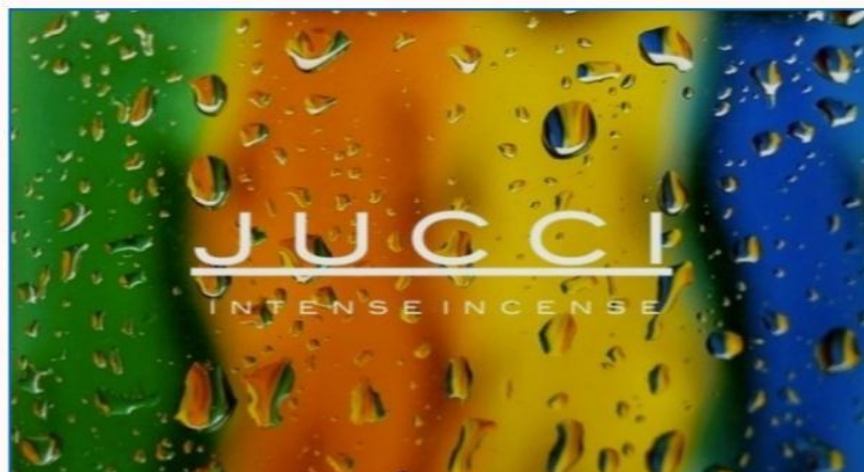
Languages

Who bother trying to ban these?

"It took us just 3 days to make get a super strong new Legal in W.A." Blend."

Plus over the next few days we will have as many as four more new blends ready to ship into and legally sell in and smoke all day long in WA

All 100% Legal, and full of juicy new noids...Yum



What's New?



JUCCI (3g) SA SAFE
~~\$119.00~~
\$79.00

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Bestsellers

01. [Hash Balls \(3g\)](#)
02. [Blue Dawn](#)
03. [The Pleasure - Death Strength](#)
04. ["Beyond Death"Immortality \(3g\)](#)
05. [Zephyr \(3 grams\)](#)





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BILLYBONG
EOFY'S

GET IN QUICK OFFER ENDS 1st July 2011

NEW!
LEGAL FORMULA!

100% LEGAL IN ALL
AUSTRALIAN STATES
INCLUDING WA

AUSSIE GOLD
EXTRA STRENGTH!

Our Strongest Blend Yet!!!

Ounces \$250 (Save \$149.95) 100 Grams \$600 (Save \$400)

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LEGAL WEED

Kronic
High? How are you.

Overnight delivery for NZ

Home Products/Accessories Reviews High Times Safety/Legal Wholesale/Stockists

Total Cost \$0 CHECK OUT

View Your Shopping Cart

Register | Login

R18 NZ Made

Discreet delivery

100% Aussie Legal Kronic Now Available!




BLACK LABEL – our new, 100% legal blend. You've been calling for it, and we've delivered – in response to demand, we've developed a new custom blend of Kronic for the Australian market. Containing no banned substances, the latest in our line of premium, home-grown smoking blends will deliver you a smooth, haze-filled blaze. The height of innovation, Black Label combines a fruity tropical flavour with a smooth long-lasting duration.

Its delicious flavour and aromatic quality makes it the perfect smoke for those looking to have some haze-filled fun and the long lasting impact is made to satisfy. With all our products, we recommend starting slow – just a few tokes, and letting the effect come to you – with Black Label, we assure you it will.

With a long lasting duration and that Kronic feel you know and love, Black Label is the perfect way to smoke up, toke up and take life a little less seriously.

Retail price:
1gram – \$29.95
3gram – \$69.95

Top Sellers

- SKUNK Oz (28 gram)
Price: NZ\$19995
ADD TO CART
- PURPLE HAZE (3 gram)
Price: NZ\$2995
ADD TO CART
- TROPICAL EXPLOSION Quarter Oz (7 gram)
Price: NZ\$5995
ADD TO CART

The Miles High Club

deals, discounts & V.I.P. Promos
Join Today

Free Monthly

Facebook, Twitter, Earn Cash

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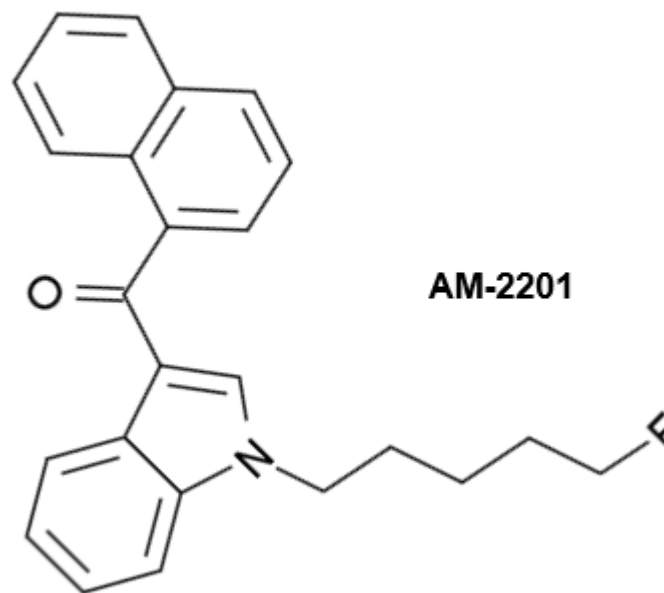
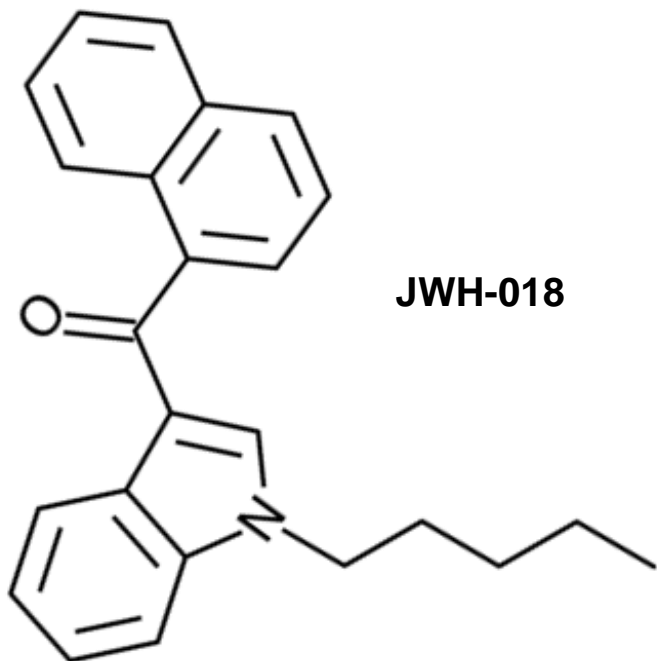


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New Chemicals (Bright et al., 2013)



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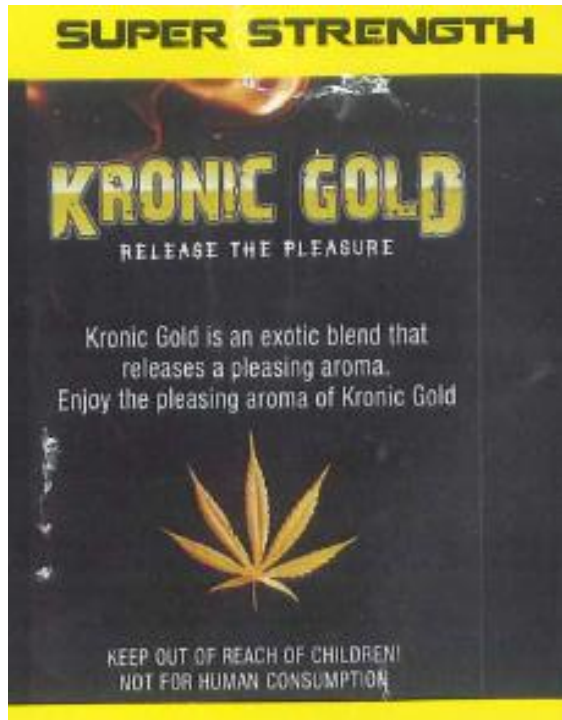


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New Local "Kronic"



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Synthetic Cannabis in Victoria (circa 2016)



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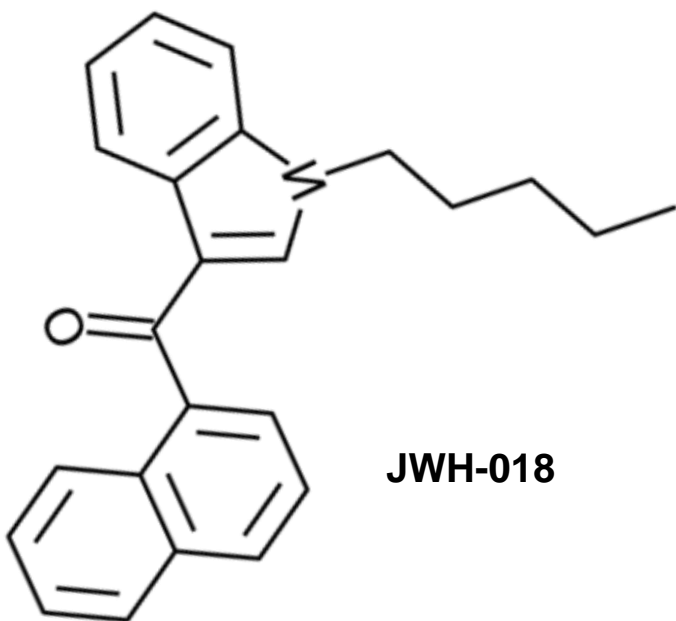


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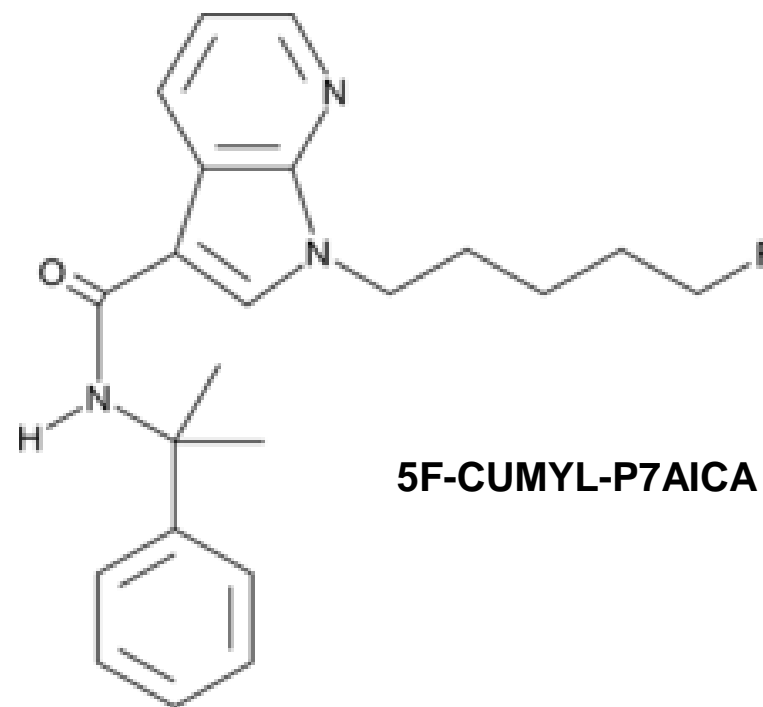
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More New Chemicals (Bannister et al., 2019)



JWH-018



5F-CUMYL-P7AICA

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Further Legislative Actions: Federal

2011: 7 individual chemicals

2012: Broad groups + “Synthetic Cannabinomimetics”

2013: Consumer law (banned brands)

2015: Anything with a Psychoactive Effect

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Further Legislative Actions: State

2013: QLD (everything)

2013: NSW (Anything with a Psychoactive Effect)

2013: SA (Similar Pharmacological effect)

2016: WA (Anything with a Psychoactive Effect)

2017: VIC (Anything with a Psychoactive Effect)

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Epidemiology of Synthetic Cannabis in Australia?



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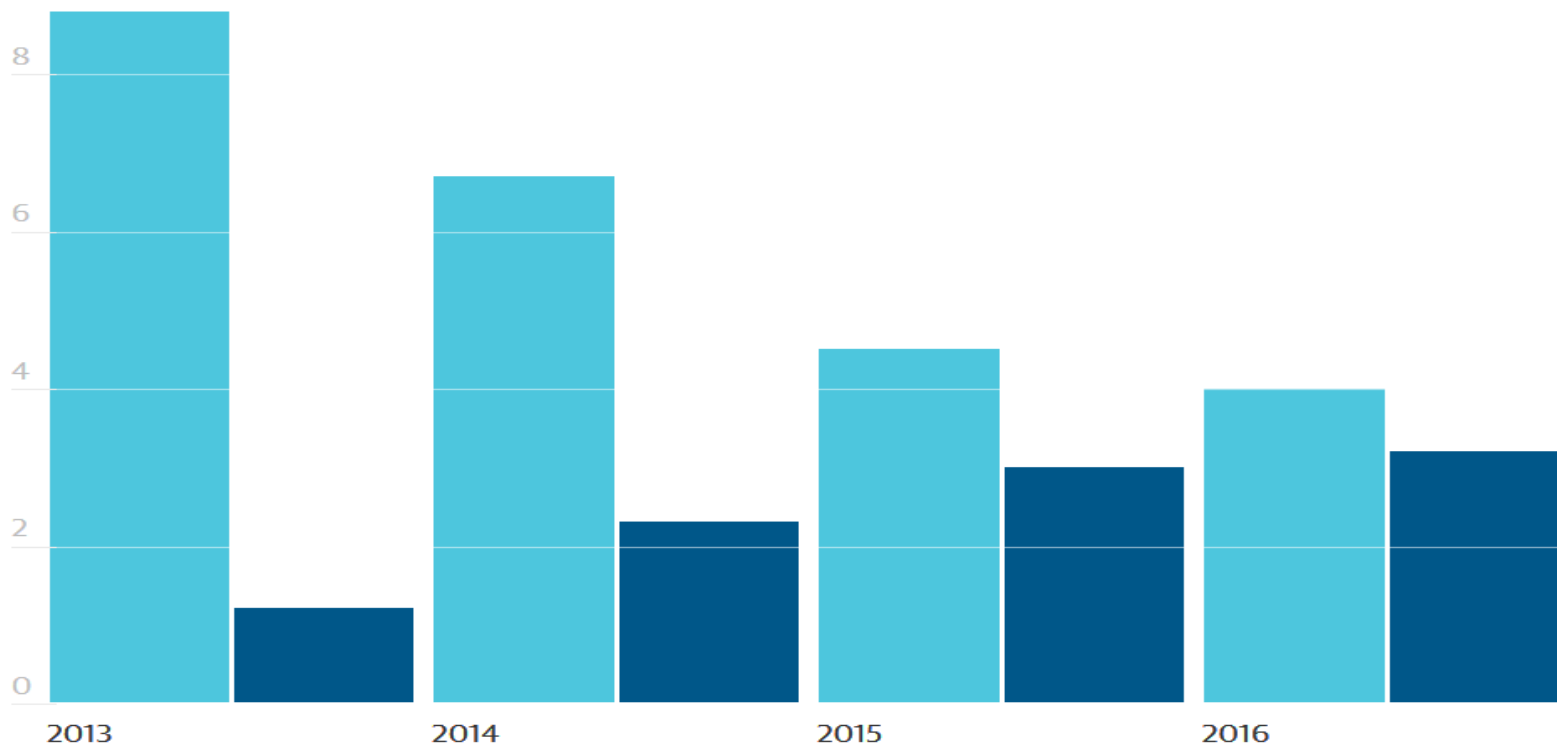


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- % purchased 'legal highs' in last 12 months
- % sought emergency medical treatment in last 12 months due to 'legal highs'



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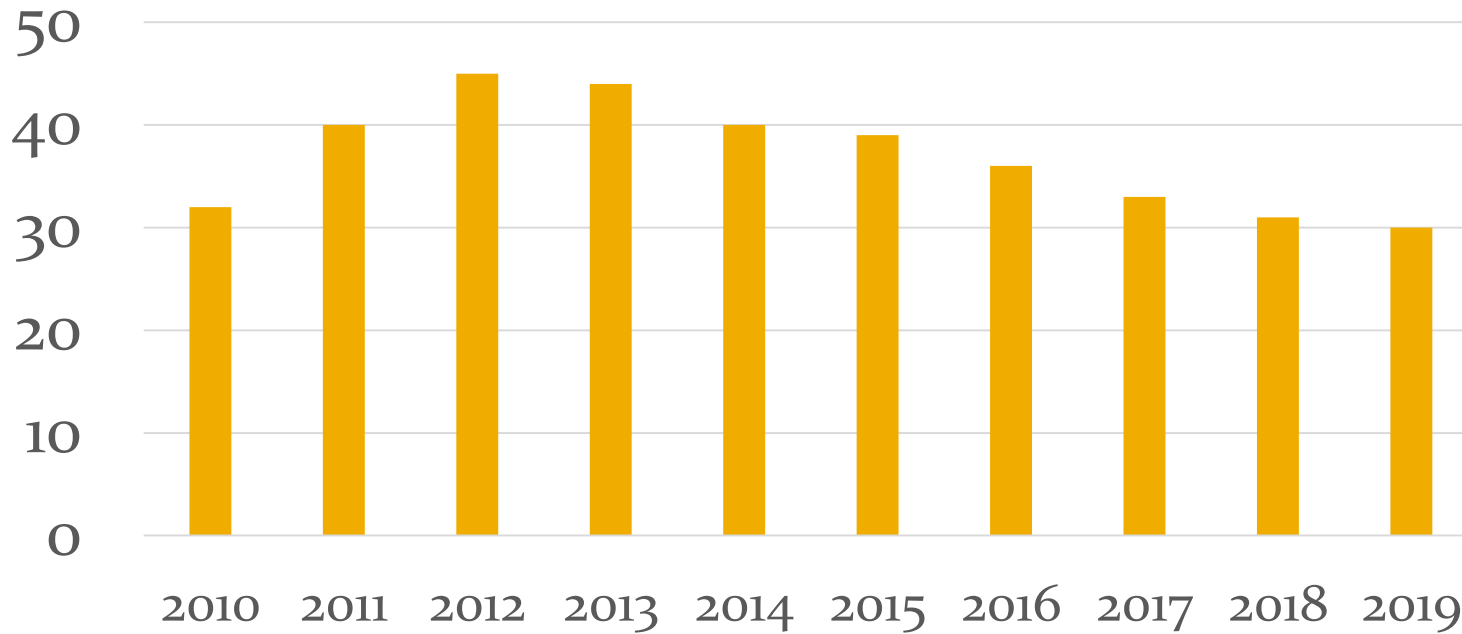


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Surveys: EDRS



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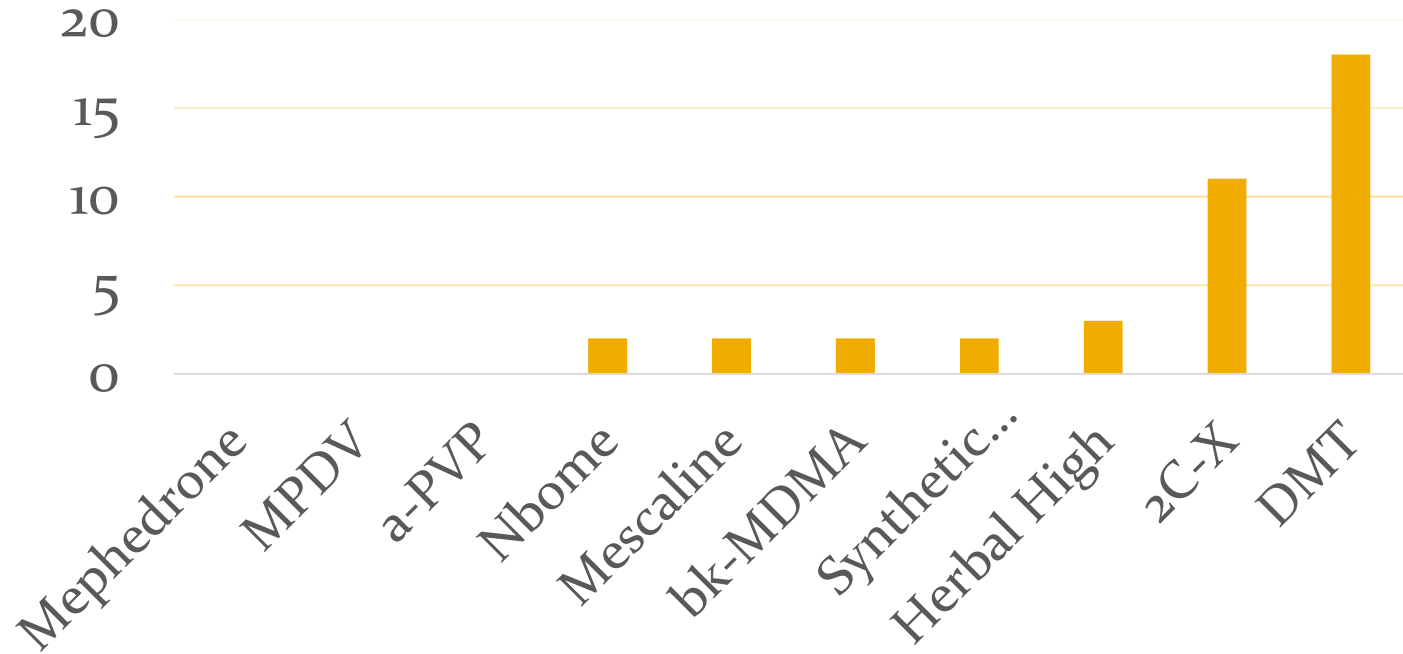


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Surveys: EDRS 2019



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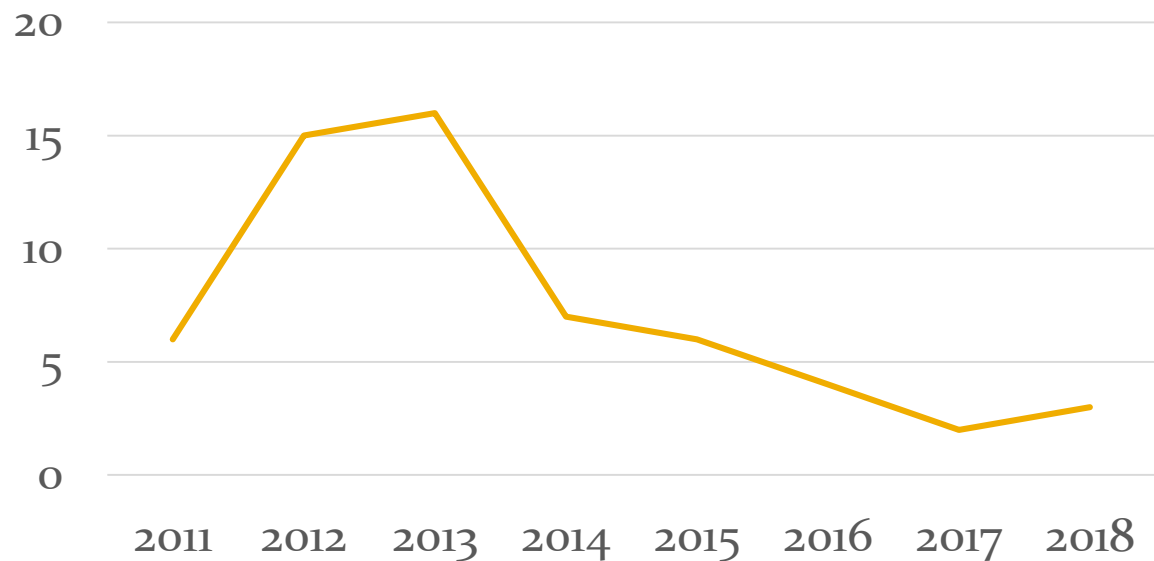


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Surveys: EDRS Synthetic Cannabis



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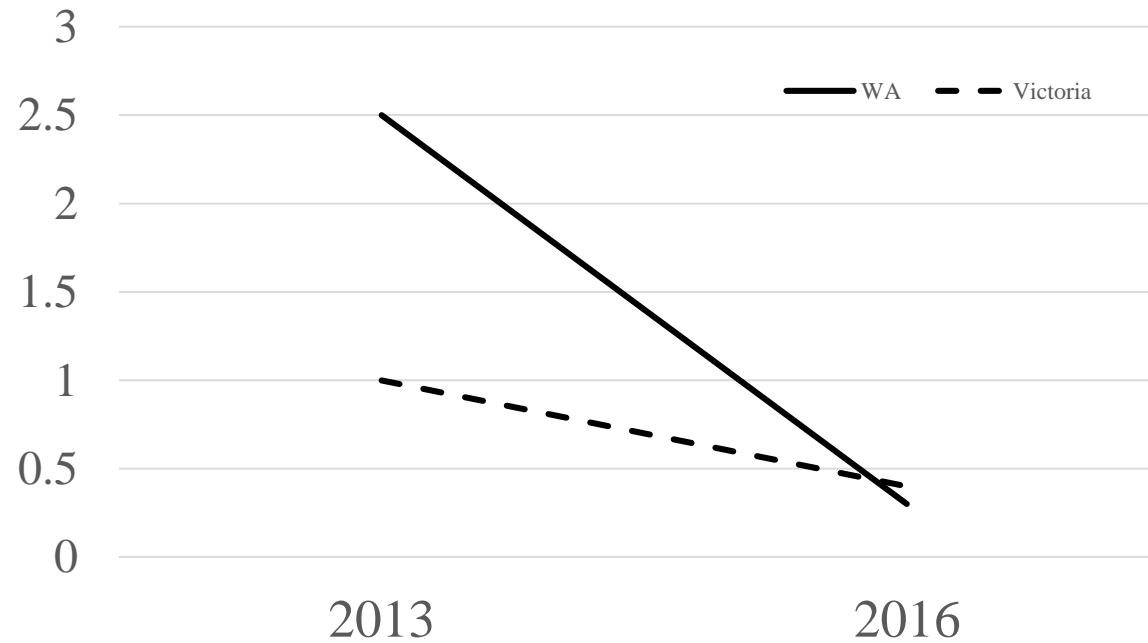


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Surveys: NDSHS (Perry, 2018)





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Interviews with Key Stakeholders (Perry, 2018)

Reduction in demand and supply due to legislation, but also:

- Raids on shops
- End of the mining boom
- Unpleasant Sx associated with newer generation SCRAAs

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Clinical considerations



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Reasons for use (Barratt & Winstock, 2015)

- 93% of Australian's would prefer to smoke natural cannabis to synthetic cannabis
- Of those who preferred it to natural Cannabis, why did they prefer it?
 - More intense effect & shorter duration (58%)
 - Easier to get than cannabis (19%)
 - Avoid Urine Screens (15%)

What about those who were smoking that didn't prefer it to natural cannabis?

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Specific Populations

- People undergoing Urine Drug Screens
 - Military personnel (for review, see Loeffler et al., 2012)
 - Mental health patients (Every-Palmer, 2010)
 - Perceived to be safer than cannabis
 - Parolees (Hopkins & Gilchrist, 2013; Perrone et al., 2012)
 - Family Court
- People who are unable to access natural cannabis
- Marginalised populations?

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Marginalised populations

“Our [outreach] team have noted when we're going to squats and shooting galleries is that there is often quite a bit of packaging from synthetic cannabinoids there and [homeless] population where I think the use of synthetic cannabinoids is higher than the general population . . . if you're highly itinerant, if you're sleeping rough, if you're couch surfing around the place, it might be hard to maintain a relationship with a regular cannabis dealer but if you know that [a local shop] will sell you this stuff under the counter then you've got a reliable, consistent source” (Perry, 2018)

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Synthetic Cannabis Withdrawal

- More complex than natural cannabis
- More acute and severe than natural cannabis
 - Cases of psychosis and seizures (e.g., Nacca et al., 2013)
 - CWAS scores peak ≤ 2 days (cf 7 – 10 days) (Macfarlane & Chrisite, 2015)

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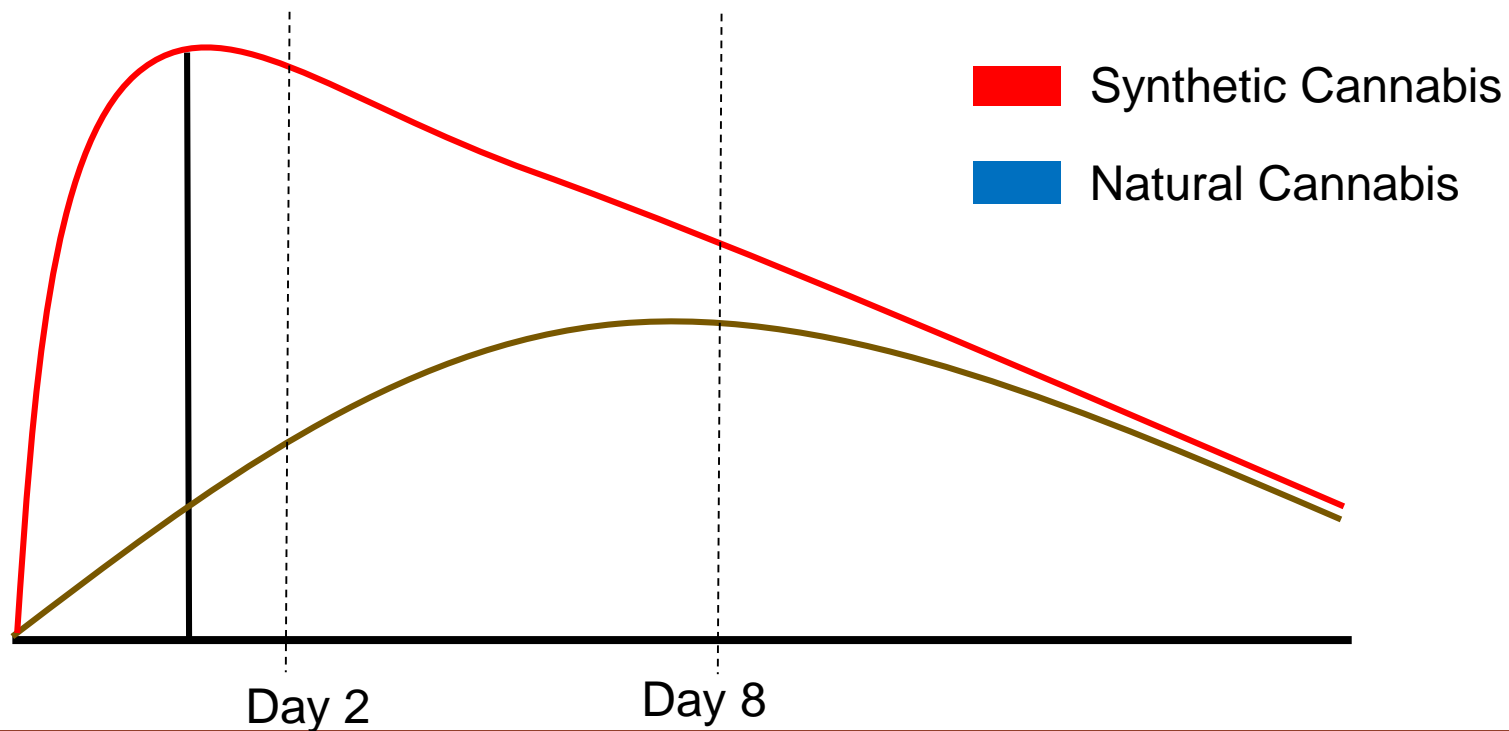


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CWAS Scores





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Synthetic Cannabis Withdrawal

- More complex than natural cannabis
- More acute and severe than natural cannabis
 - Cases of psychosis and seizures (e.g., Nacca et al., 2013)
 - CWAS scores peak ≤ 2 days (cf 7 – 10 days) (Macfarlane & Chrisite, 2015)
- Consider the possibility of in-patient withdrawal
 - Inpatient Rx was deemed necessary for 53% of people seeking community treatment in NZ (Macfarlane & Chrisite, 2015)

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Intoxication/Withdrawal Symptoms

Cognitive

Confusion, disorganised thought, memory problems,
difficulty thinking clearly

Behavioural

Agitation, restlessness, aggression

Mood
Affect

Anxiety, irritability, inappropriate laughter

Sensory
Perceptual

Paranoia, perception distortions, delusions, hallucinations,
psychosis

Physical

Tachycardia, hypertension, nausea, vomiting, tremors,
numbness, tingling, light-headedness, seizures

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Epidemiology of other NPS in Australia?



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“Rogue Researchers”

Mix of 25C-NBOMe, 4-FA and MDMA sold as MDMA in Melbourne, Australia

by Tronica

Published on 03-02-2017 07:50

24 Comments 

On the weekend 15-16 January 2017, there was a spate of poisonings, hospitalisations and deaths that have been associated a batch of capsules that were reportedly sold as MDMA or Ecstasy. Punters at Revolver nightclub and other clubs on Melbourne’s Chapel Street were affected.

The contents of these caps appeared damp, more like a brown sugar consistency than crystals or powder.



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Wastewater Analysis & Forensic Toxicology (Blade et al., 2018)

| NPS family | Compound | Jun-12 | Aug-12 | Oct-12 | Dec-12 | Feb-13 | Apr-13 | Jun-13 | Aug-13 | Oct-13 | Dec-13 | Feb-14 | Apr-14 | Jun-14 |
|----------------------|------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Cannabinoids | AB-CHMINACA | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | NM-2201 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Alpha-PVP | | | | | | | | | | Yellow | | | Green |
| | Ethylone | | | | | | | Yellow | | | | | | Blue |
| Cathinones | MDPV | | | | | Yellow | | Yellow | | | | | | |
| | Mephedrone | | | | Blue | Yellow | Yellow | | Blue | | | | Blue | Blue |
| | Methcathinone | | | | Blue | | | Blue | | | Blue | Blue | | Blue |
| | Methylone | Blue | | | | Blue | | | | | Blue | Blue | Blue | Blue |
| | N-ethylpentylone | | | | | | | | | | | | Blue | Blue |
| | Pentylone | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Acetyl Fentanyl | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Fentanyl derivatives | Furanylfentanyl | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Ocfentanil | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | P-Fluorobutrylfentanyl | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 25B-NBOMe | | | | | | Yellow | | | | | | | |
| Phenethylamine | 25H-NBOMe | | | | | | Yellow | | | | | | | |
| | 25I-NBOMe | | | | | | Yellow | | | | | | | |
| | 5-APB | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 5-EAPB | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Piperazine | BZP | | Blue | | | | | | | | | | Blue | Blue |
| | TFMPP | | | | | | | Blue | | | | Blue | Blue | Blue |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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Unintentional Use?

Heroin

Acetyl-fentanyl (10x)

MT-41 (hearing loss)

4FIB-fentanyl (4FIBF)

U47700

W-18 (?10,000)

****Carfentanil****

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Assessment

- The primary drug of choice that the person is presenting for may not be the most likely to cause them harm
 - conversation around other drugs the person is using
- The person's primary drug of choice may contain new and novel drugs that could cause harm
 - conversation about new and emerging "adulterants" they may be unintentionally ingesting

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Psychoeducation

Just Say No to Drugs



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Just Say Know to Drugs

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Psychoeducation - PEPE

Permission

- *Implied when person asks for advice or you receive consent to provide information*
- *'What do you know about synthetic cannabis? Would you like to know some more?'*

Elicit

- *'What would you most like to know about?'*
- *'How much do you know about...?'*

Provide

- *'Many of my clients have reported that trying to stop using it can cause some nasty side effects, so I would like to refer you to a specialist withdrawal unit'*

Elicit

- *'What do you think of this information?'*

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Documenting the Complex Relationship Between Humans & Psychoactives

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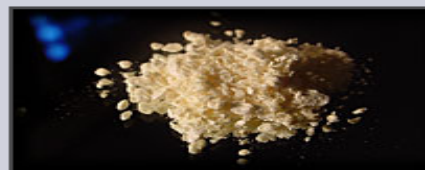


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Alcohol and Other Drugs Knowledge Centre

Psychoactive Chemicals

Psychoactive Chemicals are chemicals which have mind- or emotion-altering properties. These chemicals range from the common to the extremely uncommon and include chemicals with a long history of use as well as those with little to no track record.



| NAME | OTHER NAMES | EFFECTS |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| ABSINTHE | Green Fairy | - |
| ACETYLFENTANYL | - | Pain Killer |
| ADRENOCROME | Pink adrenaline | - |
| AET | - | Psychedelic Tryptamine |
| ALCOHOL | Beer, Wine, Liquor | Depressant |
| alpha-PVP | Flakka, Gravel | Euphoric Stimulant |
| AMITRIPTYLINE | Elavil | Anti-depressant; Sedative |
| AMPHETAMINE | Speed | Stimulant |
| AMT | IT-290 | Psychedelic Tryptamine |
| AYAHUASCA | Yage | Psychedelic Brew |
| BARBITURATES | - | Depressant |
| BK-MBDB | - | Euphoric Empathogen |
| BROMO-DRAGONFLY | 3C-Bromo-Dragonfly | Psychedelic Phenethylamine |
| BUFOTENIN | Toad Venom, 5-Hydroxy-DMT | Psychedelic Tryptamine |
| BZ | - | Anti-cholinergic Psychedelic |
| BZP | Piperazine, A2 | Stimulant |
| CAFFEINE | Coffee, Tea | Stimulant |

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| | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| DET | . | Psychedelic Tryptamine |
| DIPT | . | Psychedelic Tryptamine |
| DMT | Dimitri | Psychedelic Tryptamine |
| DOB | Bob, Dr. Bob | Psychedelic Phenethylamine |
| DOC | . | Psychedelic Phenethylamine |
| DOI | . | Psychedelic Phenethylamine |
| DOM | STP | Psychedelic Phenethylamine |
| DPT | . | Psychedelic Tryptamine |
| DXM | Robo, Tussin | Dissociative, Cough Suppressant |
| EPHEDRINE | Mini Thins | Stimulant |
| ETHER | . | Anaesthetic Gas |
| ETHYL CATHINONE | ethyl cat | Stimulant |
| ETHYLENE | . | Anaesthetic Gas |
| ETHYLPHENIDATE | . | Stimulant |
| GHB | G | Depressant |
| GHV | . | Depressant |
| HARMALA | Haoma, Harmine, Harmaline | MAOI |
| HEROIN | Horse | Opiate |
| HYPOCRETIN | Orexins | Hormone |
| IAP | . | Psychedelic Amphetamine |
| IBOGAINE | . | Psychedelic |
| INHALANTS | . | . |
| KETAMINE | K, Special K | Dissociative, Anaesthetic |
| LSA | LAA, LA -111, Lysergamide, Ergine | Psychedelic |
| LSD | Acid, L | Psychedelic |
| LSZ | | Psychedelic |
| MAOIs | . | . |
| MBDB | Eden, Methyl-J | Psychedelic Amphetamine |
| mCPP | CPP, 3-CPP | Stimulant |

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Another Resource



Bright, S. (2013). *New and Emerging Drugs: What do clinicians, allied health & youth workers need to know?* Melbourne, Australia: Australian Drug Foundation

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Thank you!

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