

DRUGS BY DESIGN

Amateur chemists have been thinking a lot about you. They’re trying to figure out the best way to take your money by cooking up dangerous, untested, but legal, designer drugs. They search the Internet and medical journals for compounds they can modify, mass produce and market. They package the drugs as bath salts, plant food, perfumes, incense, or herbal supplements and give the products flashy names like Spun, Mojo, and Blue Nitrous. They sell them online, at head shops and gas stations. They do not care about the safety or long-term consequences. They just want your money.

Designer drugs is a term used to describe a drug that has been modified to get around existing drug laws. Scientists call these copies **analog**s, making slight changes to the chemical structure of an existing drug, resulting in a new compound with similar effects to the original. These new chemicals are “legal” because the structure of the compounds, while similar, are not exactly like the illegal drug on which they are based.

Lawmakers and drug enforcement agencies sworn to protect you have a hard time keeping up. Once a new designer drug hits the market, they must move quickly to add it to the growing list of illegal substances. It’s a cat and mouse game that goes on and on.

THE GAME HAS CHANGED

Welcome to the 21st century’s technological solution for getting legally high: Cook up dangerous, untested drugs with unknown consequences and sell them for profit. The winner in this game? No one. Those making and selling these drugs will eventually wind up in jail, losing their freedom. Those who use the drugs may end up losing their lives.

RESOURCES

- Information on substance abuse and treatment options:
<http://www.teen-drug-abuse.org>
- Drug facts, activities and real stories:
<http://teens.drugabuse.gov>
- Information on substance abuse and good decision-making:
<http://www.sadd.org>

LEGAL HIGHS
chemistry's
dark side



in the know

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P.O. Box 6986 Metairie, LA 70009 • 877-329-0578
www.ESPublish.com • product #PB-DA161
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TYPES OF DESIGNER DRUGS

There are many types of designer drugs: synthetic narcotics, canabanoids, hallucinogens, amphetamines and more. Designer drugs that fall into the “legal high” category are too long to list here. With each passing day, new drug analogs are created. A new drug from Brazil, “lanca-perfume,” is inhaled for a quick rushing high. This drug contains ethyl chloride and can lead to a dangerous disruption of heart rate and other scary side effects.

EFFECTS UNKNOWN

Designer drugs can be several hundreds of times stronger than the drugs they are designed to imitate. The scariest part is that

synthetic narcotics

you never really know exactly what drug you’re getting or how it’s going to affect you. Just because you’ve taken a designer drug before doesn’t mean that the next time you take it you’ll be getting the same drug. Most designer drugs are made in makeshift laboratories with no hygiene or quality control. Variations and mistakes in the production of the drugs can have deadly consequences.

RISKY BUSINESS

The list of risks from designer drugs is as long as the list of these drugs themselves. Some potential immediate physiological effects of designer drugs may include: sweating, chills, muscle spasms, insomnia, heart or respiratory irregularities.

DEADLY CONSEQUENCES

JUST BECAUSE THEY’RE “LEGAL HIGHS” DOESN’T MEAN THEY’RE SAFE.



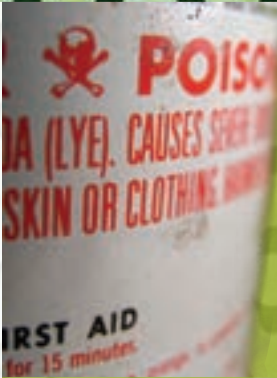
REBECCA CARDWELL

A 19 year old from Lancashire, England paid the ultimate price in the quest to get high. One evening with friends, she took a dose of a “legal high” drug called “meow meow,” which contains the designer drug mephedrone. Within hours of taking the drug, she collapsed and three days later she died of liver failure.



LOUIS WAINWRIGHT & NICHOLAS SMITH

Both 19, they took doses of “meow meow” early one evening as they prepared for a “fun” night out. Both young men collapsed and died shortly thereafter. As more and more designer drugs are developed and sold, more lives are lost.



YOU NEVER KNOW

In 1982 an illegal chemist in California accidentally messed up a batch of China White, a heroin designer drug. When the drug hit the streets, users got more than they bargained for. Instead of the high they were expecting, they suffered major brain damage and many of them developed Parkinson’s disease—which affects the nervous system with uncontrolled shaking and seizures. Some users were found with the needles still in their arms—either paralyzed or dead.

Psychological effects may include: euphoria, anxiety, paranoia, auditory, spatial or visual hallucinations, psychotic episodes, disassociation from reality, as well as suppression of the drives for sleeping, eating and sex.

Long-term effects of these drugs are **unstudied and unknown.**

Legitimate drugs are tested for years before they are deemed safe enough for human trials. Then they are tested for years more before being prescribed medically. Designer drugs are tested directly by those foolish enough to take them. To the designer drug’s makers, the drug is successful if it gets you high and doesn’t immediately kill you.

There simply is no research on the lasting effects of taking these drugs. Meaningful medical research takes a long time to develop and perform and cannot keep up with the pace of designer drugs. So when a person takes a “legal high” drug, they are conducting experimental research on themselves. Will the drug lead to crippling addiction? Permanent brain damage? Cardiac arrest? Respiratory depression? Liver or kidney failure?

LEGAL OR NOT? BEST TO STEER CLEAR

Designer drugs are just a click away on the Internet or down the street at the convenience store. Don’t be fooled into thinking that using these “legal highs” is safe. Don’t put your life in the hands of designer drug dealers whose only interests are making a quick buck. Do yourself, and those who love you, a favor and steer clear of “legal highs.”

unknown

