

What are Novel Psychoactive Substances?

Novel psychoactive substances (NPS) are drugs which were designed to replicate the effects of illegal substances like cannabis, cocaine and ecstasy - this is why they were first called 'legal highs'. In May 2016 a new law came into practice which made "legal highs" illegal and named them NPS. There are 4 types of NPS:-

Synthetic cannabinoids – these substances mimic cannabis and are sold under names such as 'Clockwork Orange', 'Black Mamba', 'Spice', 'K2' and 'Exodus Damnation'.

Stimulant-type NPS – These mimic substances such as amphetamine, cocaine and ecstasy and are sold under names such as 'BZP', 'mephedrone', 'MPDV', 'NRG-1', 'Benzo Fury', 'MDAI'.

Hallucinogenic NPS – these mimic substances like LSD/Acid and are sold under names such as 25i-NBOMe, Bromo-Dragonfly and the ketamine-like methoxeta-mine.

Opioid NPS—These mimic painkillers such as morphine and hydrocodone and are sold under names such as 'AH-7921', 'MT-45' and 'novel fentanyl'.

Opioid NPS have been reported to have higher overdose risk. There have also been reports of additional negative side effects from opioid NPS use.

Catch22 Surrey Young People's Substance Misuse Service

Catch22 Surrey Young People's Substance Misuse service is a service for young people aged between 11 and 25.

We offer free confidential advice and support.

If you would like to know more about the risks and effects of alcohol or drugs, and/or would like to access support - we will listen and work with you with to achieve the changes you would like to make.

Please contact

24/7 helpline: 08006226662

T: 01372 832905

Text: 07595088388

Email: yppsm@catch-22.org.uk

Website: <https://www.catch-22.org.uk/services/surrey-young-peoples-substance-misuse-service/>

Instagram: [syppsms_c22](https://www.instagram.com/syppsms_c22)

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NPS

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Novel psychoactive Substances (formerly called 'legal highs')

AKA: 'Clockwork orange', 'Black Mamba', 'Spice', 'K2', 'BZP', 'Mephedrone', 'MPDV', 'NRG-1', 'Benzo Fury', 'MDAI', 'Ethylphenidate', 'NBomb', 'Bromo-Dragonfly', 'methoxetamine', 'research chemicals' and others

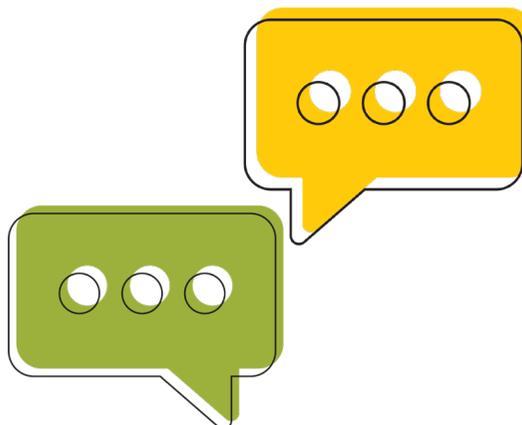
UNDERSTANDING THE RISKS

There is no safe level of drug use. It is important to be careful when taking any type of drug.



10 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

1. NPS are created by altering the chemical structure of existing drugs; using research chemicals, which have not been tested on humans. There's no way of knowing what harm, both short term and long term, these chemicals can cause because they are 'new' substances.
2. NPS come in all forms including powders, pills, capsules or smoking mixtures; they are often contained in bright, colorful packaging. They may be branded as 'legal highs' but it is illegal under the Psychoactive Substances Act (2016) to produce, sell or supply NPS for human consumption.
3. NPS are usually snorted, swallowed or smoked. However, there are reports that some people inject NPS.
4. Using NPS with alcohol or other drugs increases your risk of experiencing the negative side effects and could put you at higher risk of harm, including overdose.
5. Using NPS may trigger mental health symptoms such as psychosis (hearing voices, disturbing thoughts and visual hallucinations) or they can make a pre-existing mental health condition worse.
6. You can never be 100% certain how your body will react to any drug, but this is even more true when it comes to NPS. If you are going to use NPS, start off by taking a little of the substance to see how you react. Remember—you can't take the drug out once you have put it in!
7. Snorting drugs and sharing equipment can place people at risk of contracting blood borne viruses. Blood and mucus are easily transferred onto straws and bank notes so avoid sharing.
8. The risk of harmful side effects and overdose from NPS can be increased if you are taking prescribed medication such as antidepressants. Some NPS work by altering the levels of the same brain neurotransmitters.
9. Some NPS are more harmful and dangerous than existing drugs, such as cannabis and ecstasy, and have been linked to increased A&E admissions and in some instances death.
10. You can not be sure of the quantity or quality of NPS, as many of the chemicals are not designed for human use. Drug testing of NPS has found that these substances often contain different ingredients to what is stated on the packets.



Symptoms of Overdose Include:

Vomiting, diarrhea, shivering, hypothermia, anxiety and paranoia, restlessness or agitation, confusion, hallucinations, high temperature, chest pain, rapid breathing, irregular or fast heartbeat, tremors and seizures.

The Law on NPS

Since the Psychoactive Substances Act came into effect on 26 May 2016, none of these drugs are legal to produce, supply or import for human consumption. This includes giving them away for free. Some synthetic cannabinoids like Spice are controlled as Class B substances under the Misuse of Drugs Act.

Penalties for Class B drugs are:

- Possession – Maximum sentence: 5 years/fine or both
- Possession With Intent To Supply – Maximum sentence: 14 years/fine or both
- Supply – Maximum sentence: 14 years/unlimited fine or both
- Production – Maximum sentence: 14 years/fine or both

If using NPS and you begin to feel unwell, or notice someone is unwell whilst using, seek immediate medical attention. Go straight to A&E or for urgent medical advice contact 111 or 999 in an emergency.