Department of Justice/Drug Enforcement Administration
Drug Fact Sheet

Bath Salts

WHAT ARE "BATH SALTS?"

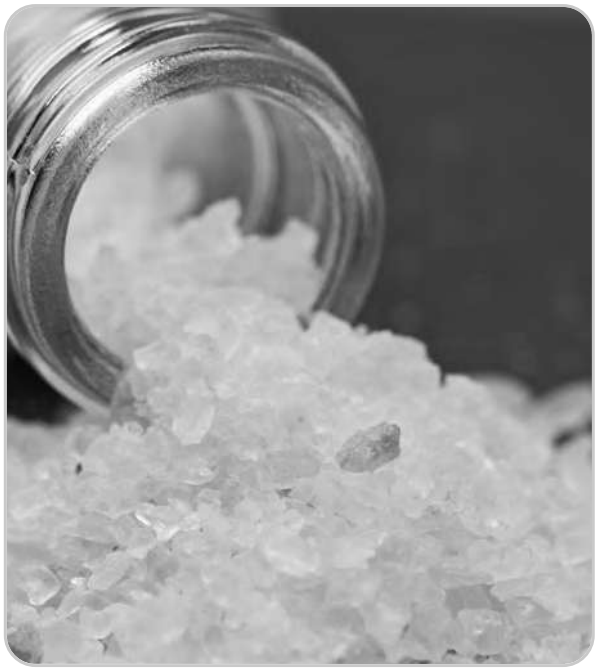
Synthetic stimulants often referred to as "bath salts" are from the synthetic cathinone class of drugs. Synthetic cathinones are central nervous stimulants and are designed to mimic effects similar to those produced by cocaine, methamphetamine, and MDMA (ecstasy). These substances are often marketed as "bath salts," "research chemicals," "plant food," "glass cleaner," and labeled "not for human consumption," in order to circumvent application of the Controlled Substance Analogue Enforcement Act. Marketing in this manner attempts to hide the true reason for the products' existence—the distribution of a psychoactive/stimulant substance for use.

WHAT IS THEIR ORIGIN?

Synthetic cathinones are manufactured in East Asia and have been distributed at wholesale levels throughout Europe, North America, Australia, and other parts of the world.

What are common street names?

- Bliss, Blue Silk, Cloud Nine, Drone, Energy-1, Ivory Wave, Lunar Wave, Meow Meow, Ocean Burst, Pure Ivory, Purple Wave, Red Dove, Snow Leopard, Stardust, Vanilla Sky, White Dove, White Knight, White Lightning



Bath salts

What does it look like?

Websites have listed products containing these synthetic stimulants as "plant food" or "bath salts," however, the powdered form is also compressed in gelatin capsules. The synthetic stimulants are sold at smoke shops, head shops, convenience stores, adult book stores, gas stations, and on websites and often labeled "not for human consumption."

How are they used?

"Bath salts" are usually ingested by sniffing/snorting. They can also be taken orally, smoked, or put into a solution and injected into veins.

What are their effects on the mind?

These synthetic substances are used for their desired effects, such as euphoria and alertness. Other effects that have been reported from the use of these drugs include psychological effects such as confusion, acute psychosis, agitation, combativeness, aggressive, violent, and self-destructive behavior; as well as paranoia, hallucinations, and delusions.

What is their effect on the body?

Adverse or toxic effects associated with the use of cathinones, including synthetic cathinones, include rapid heartbeat; hypertension; hyperthermia; prolonged dilation of the pupil of the eye; breakdown of muscle fibers that leads to release of muscle fiber contents into bloodstream; teeth grinding; sweating; headaches; palpitations; seizures.

What are their overdose effects?

In addition to effects on the mind and body, reports of death from individuals using drugs in this class indicate the seriousness of the risk people are taking when ingesting these products.

Which drugs cause similar effects?

They cause effects similar to those of other stimulants such as methamphetamine, MDMA, and cocaine.

What is their legal status in the United States?

In July 2012, the U.S. Government passed Pub.L. 112-144, the Synthetic Drug Abuse Prevention Act, which classified a number of synthetic substances under Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act. SDAPA 15 synthetic cannabinoid compounds identified by name two synthetic cathinone compounds (mephedrone and MDPV), and nine synthetic hallucinogens known as the 2C family in the most restrictive category of controlled substances. These substances were restricted by this law. Subsequently, methylone and 10 synthetic cathinones that were subject to temporary control were permanently controlled by DEA through the administrative process. Another synthetic cathinone, N-ethylpentylone, was controlled in 2018 and six other synthetic cathinones, N-ethylhexedrone, α-PHP, 4-MEAP, MPHP, PV8, and 4-Chloro-α-PHP, were temporarily controlled in 2019. A new substance, N,N-dimethylpentylone, has been the major cathinone seized by law enforcement in 2023 and has been responsible for multiple fatal overdoses.

Other synthetic cathinones may be subject to prosecution under the Controlled Substance Analogue Enforcement Act, which allows these dangerous substances to be treated as Schedule I controlled substances if certain criteria can be met.