

HSE Update on Drug Market Trends

We have provided an overview of some of the latest trends to help you stay informed.

High strength drugs

Some club drugs such as cocaine and MDMA (pills, powders and crystals) have been increasing in strength throughout Europe in recent years.

Higher dosed drugs can increase the risk of overdose (accidentally taking more than expected or more than your body can handle). There is concern that high strength drugs are leading to increased levels of drug overdose and deaths among club drug users.

European drug checking agencies have issued a number of alerts over the last few years about high strength MDMA. Ten years ago pills contained roughly 60 - 90 mg of MDMA, whereas services are now finding that pills can contain 2-3 times the average adult dose of MDMA (over 200 + mg).

New substances sold as MDMA

The Loop UK has found increasing levels of new cathinone type substances and caffeine present across a range of pills, powders and crystals.

The Loop have also identified identical pills containing four different substances – MDMA, cathinones and benzocaine. These findings highlight that products from the same batch or products that look the same can vary.

The Loop UK recently found Metaphedrone (3-Methylmethcathinone, 3-MMC), Clephedrone (4-Chloromethcathinone, 4-CMC), Pentylone (N-ethylpentylone) and Eutylone (bk-EBDB, n-ethylbutylone) in a variety of MDMA pills, powders and crystals. These substances are strong stimulants which can produce stimulation and mild euphoria with less empathogenic effects compared to MDMA. People are at risk of over consuming by re-dosing, mistaking the substance for weak

MDMA. They can also produce a strong urge to re-dose which can lead to people over consuming, increasing the risks and prolonging the effects. These substances can cause mental health reactions, anxiety, hallucinations, prolonged stimulation and severe insomnia. Lack of sleep can then increase the risk of developing psychosis. They can also cause nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

Synthetic cannabinoids in plant, vape and edible products

Synthetic cannabinoids have been found in hash/weed, low THC products, vape/liquid and edible sweets in Europe and in Ireland. These products do not contain cannabis but are synthetically made to produce similar and more potent effects.

These substances have been linked with poisonings and deaths internationally.

You may not be able to visually tell if a product contains cannabis or a synthetic cannabinoid.

Signs of concern to look out for after consuming cannabis products include: feeling dizzy, confusion, abnormal sweating, respiratory issues (difficulty breathing), chest pain/rapid heartbeat, nausea and vomiting, agitation, aggression, psychotic behaviour, hallucinations, delusions, seizures or fits, sudden loss of consciousness.

HSE Update on New Psychoactive Substances Identified in Ireland in 2021

DRUGS.ie
Drug and Alcohol Information and Support



Through Forensic Science Ireland who analyse drug seizures, we are aware of the below new psychoactive substances appearing in Ireland in 2021.

These substances represent drug seizures but this may not provide a full overview of the current Irish situation and does not guarantee the contents of current substances in circulation.

- **Synthetic cannabinoid, MDMB-4en-PINACA (29 cases):**
This substance has been found in plant material, liquid and vape products.
- **Synthetic cannabinoid, ADB-BUTINACA (10 cases):**
This substance has been found in sweets, plant material and liquids.
- **Synthetic cannabinoid, 5F-EDMB-PICA (15 cases):**
This substance has been found in plant material and some sweets.
- **Synthetic cannabinoid, 4F-MDMB-BUTINACA (16 cases):**
This substance has mainly been found in plant material and in some liquid.
- **Synthetic cathinone, Chloromethcathinone (5 cases):**
This substance was found in powder products.
- **Synthetic cathinone, Fluoro-methyl-PVP (2 cases):**
This substance was found in powder and pill products.
- **Ketamine analogue, 2-Fluorodeschloroketamine (2F-DCK) (7 cases):** This substance appeared in powder products and is a dissociative anaesthetic similar to ketamine.

It's safer not to use at all and there is a risk of unknown substances or high potency substances emerging.

If you choose to use, start low and go slow, take a very small amount and wait to see how you react to the substance.

If you take a drug and the effects are different to what you expected or it feels too strong, consider not taking any more and binning it.

Don't be afraid to get medical help if you or a friend become unwell after using drugs.

For more information go to drugs.ie/Afterlockdown

#IfYouGoGoSlow

