

STRAIGHT TO YOUR HEAD

The Short-term Effects of Fake Cocaine

Synthetic cocaine is fairly new and unregulated, so nobody is sure what it can do to your body in the long term, but it's suspected to be linked to several injuries, deaths and suicides worldwide.

But users report all sorts of scary short-term effects, including insomnia, hallucinations, anxiety, paranoia, panic attacks and thoughts of suicide.

When you snort, swallow, inject, or smoke bath salts, the chemical MDPV goes straight to your bloodstream, creating an intense high that lasts for several hours. Some users say that the negative effects of fake coke can last much longer, though, sometimes for days.

FALLING DOWN . . . And Landing Hard

The intense effects you experience when you're "coming down" from high doses of MDPV are even worse than the short-term effects.

As MDPV wears off, you can expect to feel some pretty awful after-effects, including:

- Depression
- Headaches
- Anxiety
- Muscle cramps
- Stomach pain

SAYING NO TO BATH SALTS

So what do you say when someone offers you some? Try one of these:

- "No thanks. That stuff makes you crazy."
- "No way! Do you even know what that stuff is?"
- "I'll pass. I've heard that stuff makes you paranoid."

HOOKED

Addicted to MDPV? It Can Happen.

There's not a lot of research yet about how addictive MDPV is, but researchers and users think that it's possible to get hooked on MDPV, just like you get hooked on illegal drugs like cocaine, heroin and meth.

People who have used bath salts say that once they come down from their high, they want more. Regular users say that they build up a resistance to fake coke: over time, they need to use more and more to feel high . . . and the more they use, the more paranoid and unstable they become.



TEST YOURSELF!

Take this quiz to find out if you're an expert on fake coke.

1. Which is NOT another name for fake coke?
a. Carson
b. Scarface
c. Hurricane Charlie
d. Cloud 9
2. Synthetic cocaine is sometimes sold in packets labeled:
a. "plant food"
b. "bath salts"
c. A and B
d. None of the above
3. The newer versions of bath salts, that can be found in stores or online, are safer than the original, banned versions.
a. True
b. False
4. The dangerous, addictive chemical in fake coke is called:
a. MDMA
b. MVP
c. MDPV
d. LSD
5. Using bath salts is safer than using cocaine.
a. True
b. False

BATH SALTS



Answers: 1. A; 2. C; 3. B; 4. C; 5. B

STAY SAFE SERIES

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FAKE COCAINE, REAL DANGER



A NIGHT TO FORGET . . .

You're chilling out at a party when your friend Raymond comes over and hands you a brightly colored packet full of white powder.

"Try this, man," Raymond says. "It's awesome, and it'll get you really messed up."

You look at the packet. The label says "bath salts" – but you know what it really is. It's fake cocaine, and everyone at school has been talking about it.

"C'mon, try it," Raymond says. "I'm telling you, it's totally safe."

You open the bag and snort bath salts for the first time.

At first, nothing happens . . . and then everything starts to look wrong. Your mind is racing, and you can feel beads of sweat forming on your forehead. You look around the room, and you feel like everybody's watching you. They're laughing at you. They're talking about you. You just know it.

That's when you freak out. You start screaming and flailing your arms around, swinging at anyone who gets in your way. Someone eventually gets scared enough to call 9-1-1.

When you get to the hospital, you're confused and disoriented. When your mom gets there, you don't even know who she is.

It takes you a few hours to come down, and when you do, the doctor tells you that you're very fortunate. He's seen kids come to the ER after snorting bath salts before and they don't all snap out of it. You'll be able to go home in a few hours, but not everyone is that lucky. Some kids end up in psych wards after using fake coke; others do permanent damage to their health.

WHAT'S IN SYNTHETIC COCAINE, ANYWAY?

Sometimes, it's sold in packages labeled "bath salts" or "plant food" and even says "Not for human consumption". Fake cocaine – also known as Cloud 9, Ocean, Hurricane Charlie, Scarface, Ivory Wave, White Lightning, Red Dove and White Dove – is a nasty, toxic mix of chemicals.

The main chemicals in fake coke are mephedrone, 3-4 methylenedioxypropylamphetamine (MDPV) and methylone. They are strong stimulants that have similar effects to cocaine, methamphetamine, MDMA and/or LSD.

But what else is in bath salts?

Synthetic stimulants, that are chemicals, which are manufactured derivatives of cathinone. Cathinone, a central nervous system stimulant, is an active chemical found naturally in the khat plant.

BUT IT'S LEGAL . . . RIGHT?

Not exactly! On July 10, 2012, the President of the United States signed the Synthetic Drug Abuse Prevention Act of 2012. Synthetic compounds commonly found in bath salts, or synthetic cocaine, were banned, placing them under Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act. Most states have passed similar laws to keep synthetic drugs off the streets. But these regulations haven't stopped manufacturers from designing new versions of the drug that don't include these outlawed compounds. This is why you might see bath salts sold in stores and online. These new versions are as bad, or worse than the banned versions.



A FUTURE DOWN THE DRAIN

Carson's Story

Everyone knew that Carson was going to be a pro skater one day. He'd gotten his first skateboard when he was in junior high, and before long he was competing and winning in state and regional skate contests.

After he graduated high school, Carson began travelling the country, competing in big-name events. He'd even been approached by a couple of skate companies who were interested in sponsoring him.

Carson's future looked bright – but there was one thing holding him back. Carson struggled with drug abuse. His friends described him as the kind of guy who'd try anything once.

When Carson's skating started taking off, he made an effort to stop partying – but it was hard to quit. Then someone told him about bath salts – they'd mess you up, but they were safer.

So one night, Carson went to the corner store and bought a pack of "Bliss". When he got home, he went to his room and snorted it. He felt high right away – it was intense. Too intense.

Suddenly, Carson felt scared and paranoid – he was hearing things and seeing things. He was convinced that people were trying to break into his apartment.

Finally, he called his dad. His dad called an ambulance.

By the time the ambulance got to Carson's apartment building, they were too late. Carson had committed suicide. They found him hanging in his closet; he'd left a rambling suicide note and the packet of bath salts was in his pocket.

Think synthetic cocaine is a safe high? That's what Carson thought, too.