

WHAT'S TRENDING? KRATOM

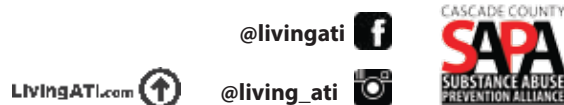
BY DR. DEBORAH ROSE, BENEFIS HEALTH SYSTEM

Although illegal in several countries, Kratom has gained in popularity in the U.S. among those seeking a “natural” alternative for treatment of pain. It has also been used for management of opioid withdrawal symptoms. Others have used Kratom for management of anxiety and depression. In Southeast Asia, Kratom leaves have been used to fight fatigue and to manage pain, opioid withdrawal and a variety of conditions for which there is no scientific proof of effectiveness.

Currently illegal in five states, DEA also announced plans to move forward to place Kratom on the list of Schedule 1 drugs.

There are several serious problems with Kratom. Of great concern is the very high potential for addiction. Kratom has complex properties, because it is both a stimulant and a pain killer/sedative. Because it is a plant—either the dried plant material or an extract—the perception is that it is healthy. Kratom can interact with other herbs and psychoactive medications in unpredictable ways.

Until this drug has been studied more thoroughly, the use of unregulated products—sadly sold openly here in Great Falls despite the known harmful effects—should be avoided. Kratom is dangerous. Kratom withdrawal is very difficult and may require medical treatment.



OVER *the*

COUNTER

& o u t o f

CONTROL

WHAT DO YOU KNOW about the DRUGS OUR LOVED ONES are STUMBLING UPON ?????

WHAT ARE THE DRUGS BEING ABUSED?

KRATOM is a tropical plant native to southeast Asia with psychotropic or mind-altering compounds. It is commonly used as a pain reliever. (See Dr. Rose’s article on the back page for more information on Kratom and its prevalence in our community.)

SPICE/K2 is a mix of herbs and laboratory-made chemicals with mind-altering effects. It is sold as a “legal” alternative to marijuana. These products are labeled “not for human consumption” in an attempt to shield the manufacturers, distributors, and retail sellers from criminal prosecution.

BATH SALTS is a name given to synthetic cathinones, which are marketed as cheap substitutes for other stimulants, such as methamphetamine and cocaine. Not to be confused with Epsom Salts, bath salts are sometimes labeled as “plant food,” “jewelry cleaner” or “phone screen cleaner.”

Several **COUGH & COLD MEDICINES** contain ingredients that are psychoactive (mind-altering) when taken in higher-than-recommended dosages and some people misuse them. Two commonly misused medicines are dextromethorphan (DXM) and Promethazine. Youth are often more likely to misuse medications containing DXM, because these medications can be purchased without a prescription.

WHY ARE THEY SO DANGEROUS?

- Very highly addictive
- Most of these substances can be used through electronic vaping—undetectable
- Many are unregulated, so there are no safety standards
- Can be purchased without a prescription
- Easily ordered on the Internet—NO AGE LIMIT
- Legal in the United States

WHAT ARE THE HEALTH RISKS?

- Seizures
- Hallucinations
- Constipation
- Dry Mouth
- Nausea
- Loss of Appetite
- Itching
- Suicidal Tendencies
- Homicidal Tendencies
- Delusions
- Over-stimulation
- Aggression
- Paranoia

Sources: National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA), Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA), US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and NIDA for Teens.

WHAT DO THEY LOOK LIKE?



KRATOM

SPICE / K2



BATH SALTS



COUGH AND COLD



HOW CAN IT BE PURCHASED?



TOBACCO STORES



GAS STATIONS



NEIGHBORHOOD STORES



CONVENIENCE STORES

+ THE INTERNET