



# Poison Prevention

## Newsletter

June 2015

UPSTATE  
MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

750 East Adams Street • Syracuse, NY 13210

## Synthetic Marijuana

### WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

Initial calls to Poison Centers about synthetic marijuana began in 2011 continuing through 2012, dropping to only 52 calls in 2013. However use of Synthetic Marijuana is once again in the news. Most of it is bad news. While calls were on the incline in 2014, April 2015 saw a dramatic increase in these calls to Upstate New York Poison Center specifically with patients showing significant symptoms requiring emergency care. As a result, the poison center partnered with the Onondaga County Department of Health to issue a community health warning.

### WHAT IS SYNTHETIC MARIJUANA?

As a man made drug, it is not marijuana. It is more powerful and much more dangerous. The manmade chemical is sprayed on plant leaves and stems, dried and then sold in small tinfoil bags as incense or potpourri. Often called Spice, K2 or locally known as Spike, it is usually smoked but can be eaten. There are many other names for this product, including: Geeked Up, Kisha Cole, Bliss, Dank and more.

### WHERE IS SPIKE/K2/SPICE (SYNTHETIC MARIJUANA) SOLD?

Spike/K2/Spice can be bought very easily on the internet. It can also be found in head shops, smoke shops, convenience stores and some gas stations. Government officials continue in their attempts to make it illegal, not an easy process.



**NAMES CHANGE OFTEN: SO DO THE CHEMICALS IN EACH NEW BATCH OF SYNTHETIC MARIJUANA.**

### WHY IS SPIKE/K2/SPICE (SYNTHETIC MARIJUANA) SOLD IF THEY ARE DRUGS AND HARMFUL?

Spike/K2/Spice is sold in a way that is one step ahead of state and local regulations. By stating on the package "not for human consumption" makes it very difficult to regulate. It is cheap, easy to purchase, and doesn't show up on standard drug tests.

### HOW DOES SPIKE/K2/SPICE (SYNTHETIC MARIJUANA) AFFECT YOU?

- Agitation
- Anxiety/Paranoia
- High Heart Rate
- High Blood Pressure
- Convulsions (seizures)
- Seeing things (hallucinations)

OR

- Slow Heart Rate
- Passing out (coma)
- **Death has resulted in some cases in the US**

### WHAT HAPPENS TO THE PEOPLE WHO USE K2/SPICE (SYNTHETIC MARIJUANA)?

When people use K2/Spice (synthetic marijuana), they can have heart attacks,



*Dr. Christine Stork, Clinical Director of the Upstate New York Poison Center, Dr. Indu Gupta, Onondaga County Commissioner of Health and Butch Hoffmann, Special Operations Manager, Rural Metro at the recent press conference called to alert the public to the dangers of synthetic marijuana.*

brain damage, kidney failure and/or hallucinations (seeing things) that can last for many days.

### HOW MANY CALLS ABOUT K2/SPICE (SYNTHETIC MARIJUANA)?

The Upstate NY Poison Center received 214 exposure calls in 2011. In 2012, 273 and in 2013, only 52 calls. January to May 21 2015, we received 266 exposure calls, spiking in April with 168 calls. Spike/K2/Spice (synthetic marijuana) is used by all people, regardless of age, gender, or status.

**Talk to your family members, children, parents, and health care providers about synthetic marijuana.**

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

**1-800-222-1222**

# Summer Flowers Poisonous to Dogs

**Rhododendron:** All parts of this flowering woody shrub plant are considered poisonous. Ingestion can cause gastrointestinal problems (drooling, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain), cardiovascular (abnormal heart rate, weakness, drop in blood pressure), and central nervous system (tremors, loss of vision, seizures, coma).

**Daffodil:** Poisons in the bulbs and flower can cause irritation, vomiting, diarrhea and abdominal pain. More severe ingestions can affect the heart and lungs.

**Hyacinth:** The bulb of this plant contains poison that and can cause increased heart rate, vomiting, diarrhea, drooling or breathing difficulty.

**Lily of the valley:** This sweetly smelling but highly poisonous woodland flowering plant can cause an irregular heart beat, low blood pressure, coordination problems, vomiting, seizures and coma.

**Oleander:** All parts of this popular plant are toxic and can affect the heart, decrease body temperature and cause nausea, drooling, vomiting and seizures.

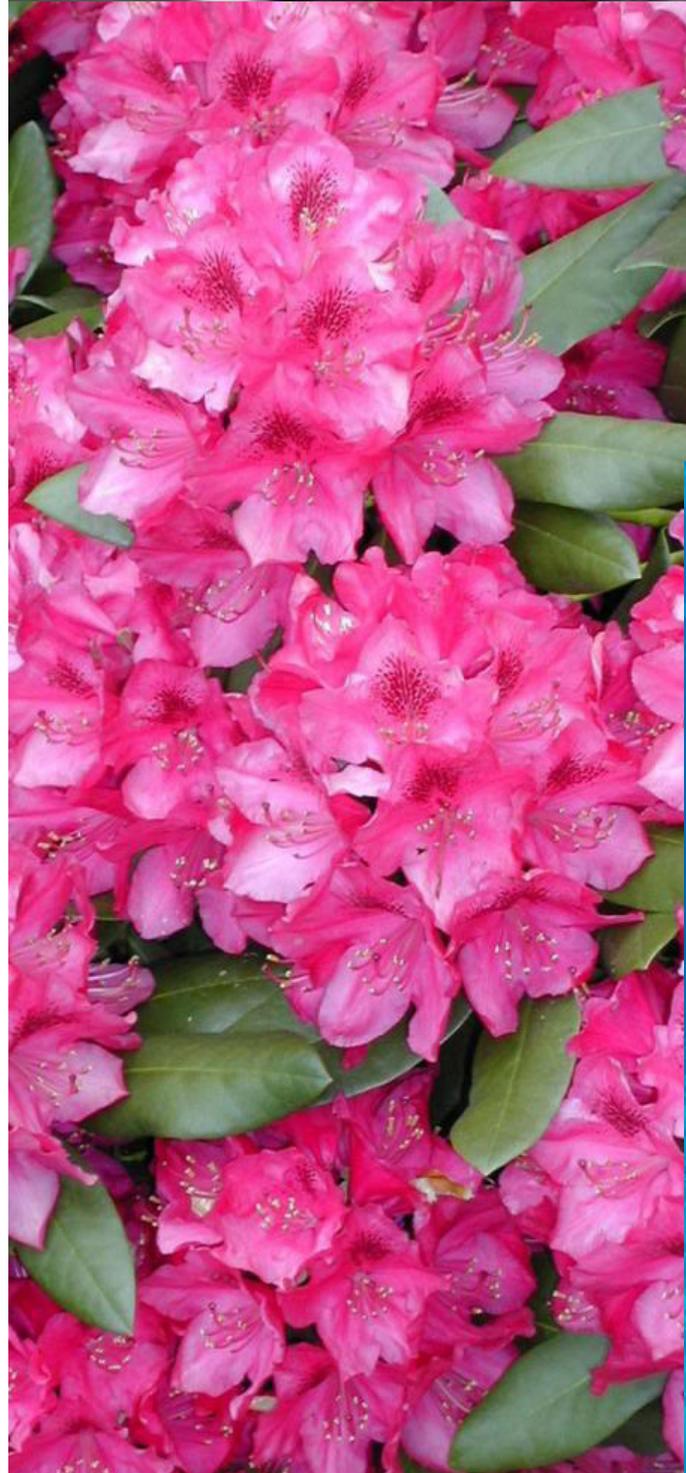
**Rhubarb (Rheum):** Although the stalks are eatable, the leaves contain oxalate crystals, poisons that can cause kidney damage. Poisoning signs include drooling, vomiting, diarrhea, weakness, tremors, bloody urine, and changes in thirst and urination. In rare cases, renal failure can occur.

**Tomato:** The greenery, including the unripend, green tomato, contains solanine, a toxic ingredient that can prompt gastric upset, weakness, and a decrease in heart rate. In most cases, a small ingestion will cause gastrointestinal irritation. Larger ingestions can be more serious.

**FOR HELP refer to both sources used for this information about plants.**

**Pet Poison Helpline** at 855-764-7661 is a 24-hour animal poison control service available for pet owners and veterinary professionals who need help treating a potentially poisoned pet. A \$49 per incident fee is payable by credit card. This fee covers the initial consultation as well as all follow-up calls. Additionally the website provides extensive resource information at [www.petpoisonhelpline.com](http://www.petpoisonhelpline.com)

**ASPCA Animal Poison Control** is a resource for any animal poison-related emergency, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. If you think that your pet may have ingested a potentially poisonous substance, call (888) 426-4435. A \$65 consultation fee may be applied to your credit card. Additionally the website provides extensive resource information at [www.asPCA.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control](http://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control)



# Danger: Swimming Pool Cleaners

Swimming pool cleaner poisoning occurs when someone swallows these substances, touches the chemicals and acids in them, or breathes in their fumes. Chlorine, a chemical in swimming pool cleaners, is more likely than the acids to cause serious poisoning.

If you have an exposure, call your local poison control center at 1-800-222-1222. If the victim is unconscious or has difficulty breathing call 911.

## Poisonous Ingredient found in pool cleaners

- Bromine
- Calcium chloride
- Calcium hypochlorite
- Chelated copper
- Chlorine
- Soda ash
- Sodium bicarbonate
- Various mild acids (sodium bisulfate, phosphoric acid, sodium thiosulfate, cyanuric acid)

## HOME CARE

Call poison control or get medical help right away and follow their instructions.

If the chemical is on the skin or in the eyes, flush with lots of water for at least 15 minutes.

If the person breathed in the poison, immediately move him or her to fresh air.

## PREPARE TO RESPOND TO QUESTIONS

- Person's age, weight, and condition
- Name of the product (ingredients and strengths, if known)
- Time it was swallowed
- Amount swallowed

## POISON CONTROL

Your local Poison Control Center (1-800-222-1222) is available from anywhere in the United States. This Helpline number will put you in touch with poison experts. They will give you further instructions.

As a free and confidential service, all local poison control centers in the United States use one national number. You should call if you have any questions about poisoning or poison prevention. It does NOT need to be an emergency. You can call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

National Library of Medicine. National Institute of Health gov/medlineplus. Swimming Pool Cleaner Poisoning: MedlinePlus Medical Encyclopedia. (n.d.), Retrieved May 26, 2015. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/002839.htm>



# Program your cell phone 1-800-222-1222



**You just may save a life!**

**A Poisoning Can  
Happen to **You!****

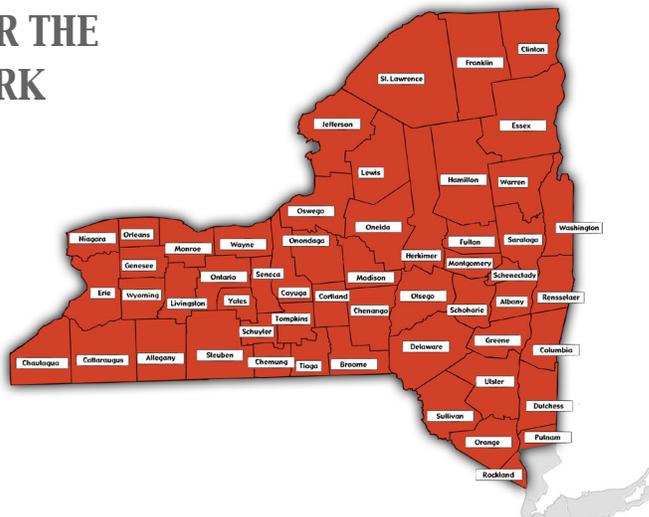


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**Unintentional  
Poisoning Can  
Happen To You...  
At Any Age!**

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