



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Second Death Of An Individual Who Used Synthetic Cannabinoids

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) is reporting the death of a second individual who experienced severe bleeding and reported using synthetic cannabinoids, often called Spice, K2, or fake weed. To date, IDPH has reports of 56 people, including two deaths, in the Chicago area and in central Illinois who have experienced severe bleeding and reported using synthetic cannabinoids. All cases have required hospitalization for symptoms such as coughing up blood, blood in the urine, severe bloody nose, and/or bleeding gums. Nine of these cases have tested positive for brodifacoum, a lethal anticoagulant often used as a rodenticide, or rat poison.

“We continue to see the number of cases rise,” said IDPH Director Nirav D. Shah, M.D., J.D. “IDPH is continuing to work with local health departments and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, along with other partners, to try to identify common products. Without more information, IDPH does not know how much contaminated product is circulating or where. We strongly urge everyone not to use synthetic cannabinoids.”

Synthetic cannabinoids are human-made, mind-altering chemicals that are sprayed on to dried plant material. They can be smoked or sold as liquids to be vaporized in e-cigarettes and other devices. These chemicals are called cannabinoids because they are similar to chemicals found in the marijuana plant. The health effects from using synthetic cannabinoids can be unpredictable, harmful, and deadly.

IDPH continues to investigate to try to identify any common products and determine where they were obtained. Synthetic cannabinoids are found across Illinois and the U.S. in convenience stores, gas stations, drug paraphernalia shops, novelty stores, and online.

Anyone who has a reaction to synthetic cannabinoids, such as severe bleeding, should call 911 or have someone take them to the emergency department immediately.

To maintain confidentiality, additional information about the cases, including the two deaths, is not available. The number of cases and counties of residence are posted on the [IDPH website](#) at 1:30 p.m. each weekday.

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