

*West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources
Bureau for Behavioral Health and Health Facilities*



Behavioral Health is Essential to Health

Prevention Works



Treatment is Effective



People Recover



Improving the quality of life for West Virginians with behavioral health needs

WV Drug Trends

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WV Drug Threat Outlook

- **Alcohol and tobacco** will remain principal drug threats to WV because of existing high levels of abuse, availability and accessibility
- **Pharmaceutical abuse** (opiates) has registered as a significant problem, reaching into every county in WV
- **Marijuana** will continue to be the most widely available and commonly abused illicit drug in WV.

WV Drug Threat Outlook

- **Methamphetamine** production has increased since 2006 and has spread throughout the state.
- The threat posed by **Synthetic Drugs** such as Bath Salts and Synthetic Marijuana (K2) has been on the radar since 2010 and has risen significantly in 2011.
- **Cocaine** has been found in WV but has not shown a significant increase in use during the recent past.

Marijuana (Cannabis)

Cannabis and Hashish: Weed, Pot, 420, Grass, Hash, Joints, Mary Jane, Chronic, Herb, Dope



Individually Packaged Cannabis Buds
Image by BizOne, © 2001 Erowid.org



Photo © Erowid.org

Differences in Marijuana Today

The average potency of marijuana has more than doubled since 1998

There are also synthetic forms of marijuana which are chemically based and more potent

Source: National Center for National Products Research

Mehmedic, Z. et al. (2010) Potency trends of THC and other cannabinoids in confiscated cannabis preparations from 1993 to 2008. *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 55(5), 1209-1217.

Narcotics

- Drugs used medicinally to relieve pain
- Have a high potential for abuse and dependence
 - tolerance builds quickly; user needs more and more to get same effect
- Cause relaxation with an immediate “rush”
- Initial unpleasant effects – restlessness, nausea
- Street vs. Prescription Narcotics
 - **Street Narcotic: Heroin** (Smack, Horse, Junk)
 - **Prescription Narcotics** (Vicodin, Percodan, Demerol, Oxycontin, Methadone, Codeine)

Street Narcotics: Heroin

- Usually smoked, injected, sniffed, or taken orally
- Use causes confusion, itching, constipation, blocks pain messages to brain
- Increases risk of Hepatitis and HIV if injected



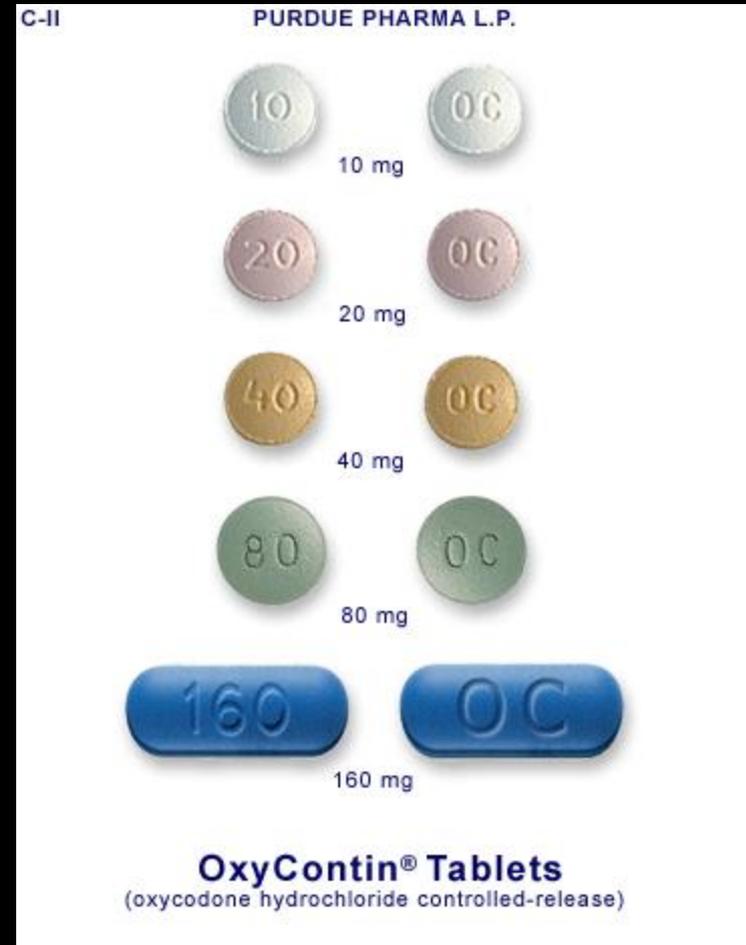
Small Packets of Heroin

Prescription Opioids

- Oxycodone (OxyContin, Percodan, Percocet)
- Propoxyphene (Darvon)
- Hydrocodone (Vicodin, Lortab, Lorcet)
- Hydromorphone (Dilaudid)
- Meperidine (Demerol)
- Diphenoxylate (Lomotil)
- Morphine (Kadian, Avinza, MS Contin)
- Codeine
- Fentanyl (Duragesic)
- Methadone

OxyContin

Minimum \$1 per milligram on the street, but this is on the rise due to tightening of prescription drug laws.



Hydrocodone

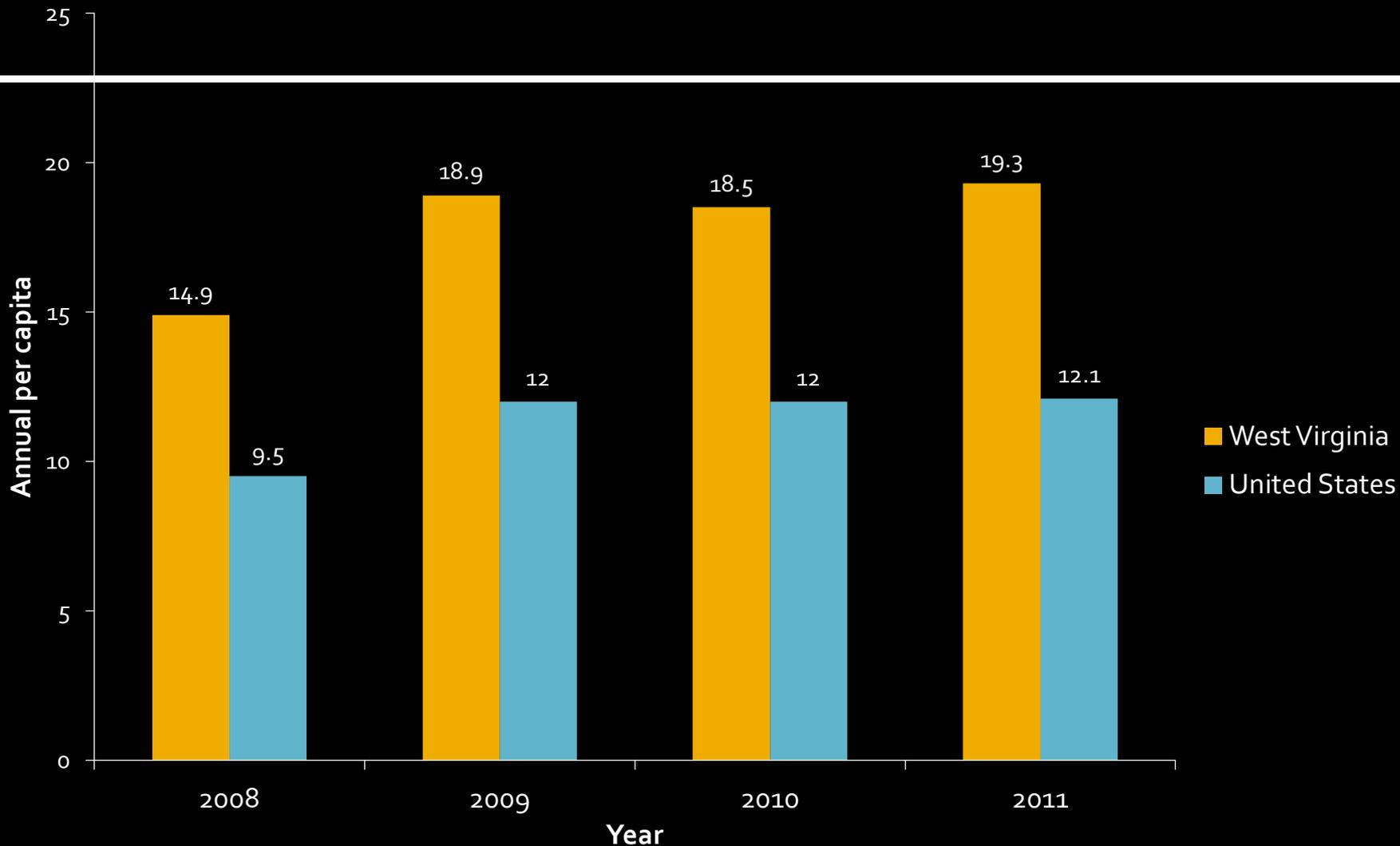
*Street Value:
Approximately
\$10 per pill*



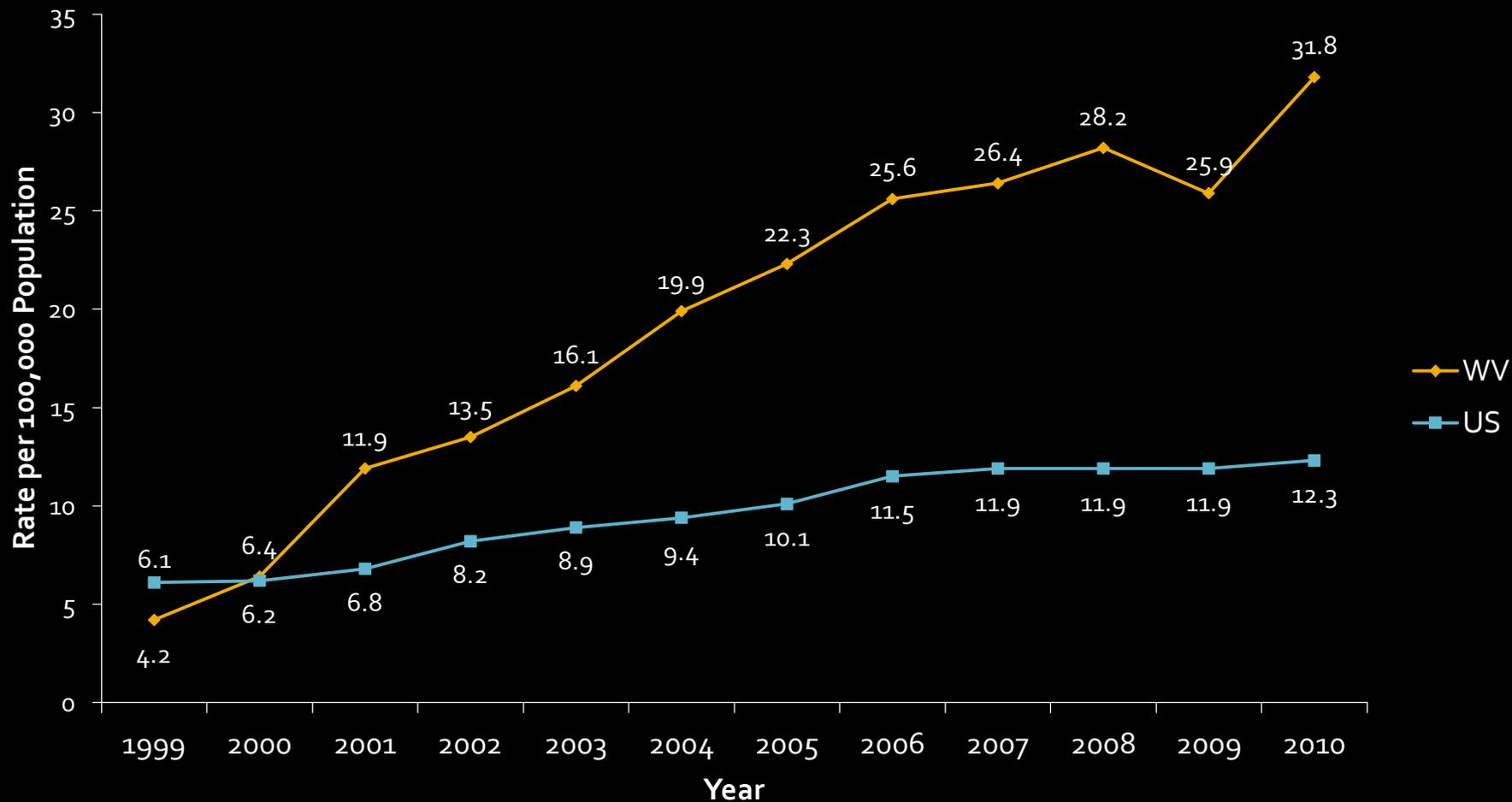
2 different brands of 5 mg Hydrocodone tablets
Photo by DoctorX, © 2002 Erowid.org



Average Number of Retail Prescription Drugs Filled at Pharmacies (Annual Per Capita)



Age-Adjusted Death Rate From Drug Overdose/Poisoning in West Virginia and United States: 1999-2010



Source: WV Health Statistics Center

Stimulants

- Cocaine, Amphetamines, Methamphetamines
- High potential for abuse/dependence
- These are used to:
 - relieve fatigue and increase alertness
 - feel stronger and more decisive
 - to counteract tranquilizers and alcohol

Prescribed Stimulants

- Dextroamphetamine (Dexedrine and Adderall)
- Methylphenidate (Ritalin and Concerta)



Source: www.justice.gov/dea

Cocaine and Crack Cocaine

- Street Names: Coke, Dust, Snow, Blow, Powder, Lines, Rock (Crack Cocaine)



Baggie of Powder Cocaine
Photo by Penguin Butler, © 2001 Erowid.org



Pressed powder Cocaine (1/2 oz)
Photo by Chizzle-fiend, © 2002 Erowid.org



Cocaine and Crack Cocaine

- It is illegal – in any form
- Even first-time users can have seizures or fatal heart attacks
- It is expensive – regular users can spend hundreds or thousands of dollars on cocaine each week
- Cocaine impairs judgment and increases risk for
 - poor decision-making (financial, breaking the law)
 - HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis
 - being the victim of rape and/or unplanned pregnancy

Methamphetamines

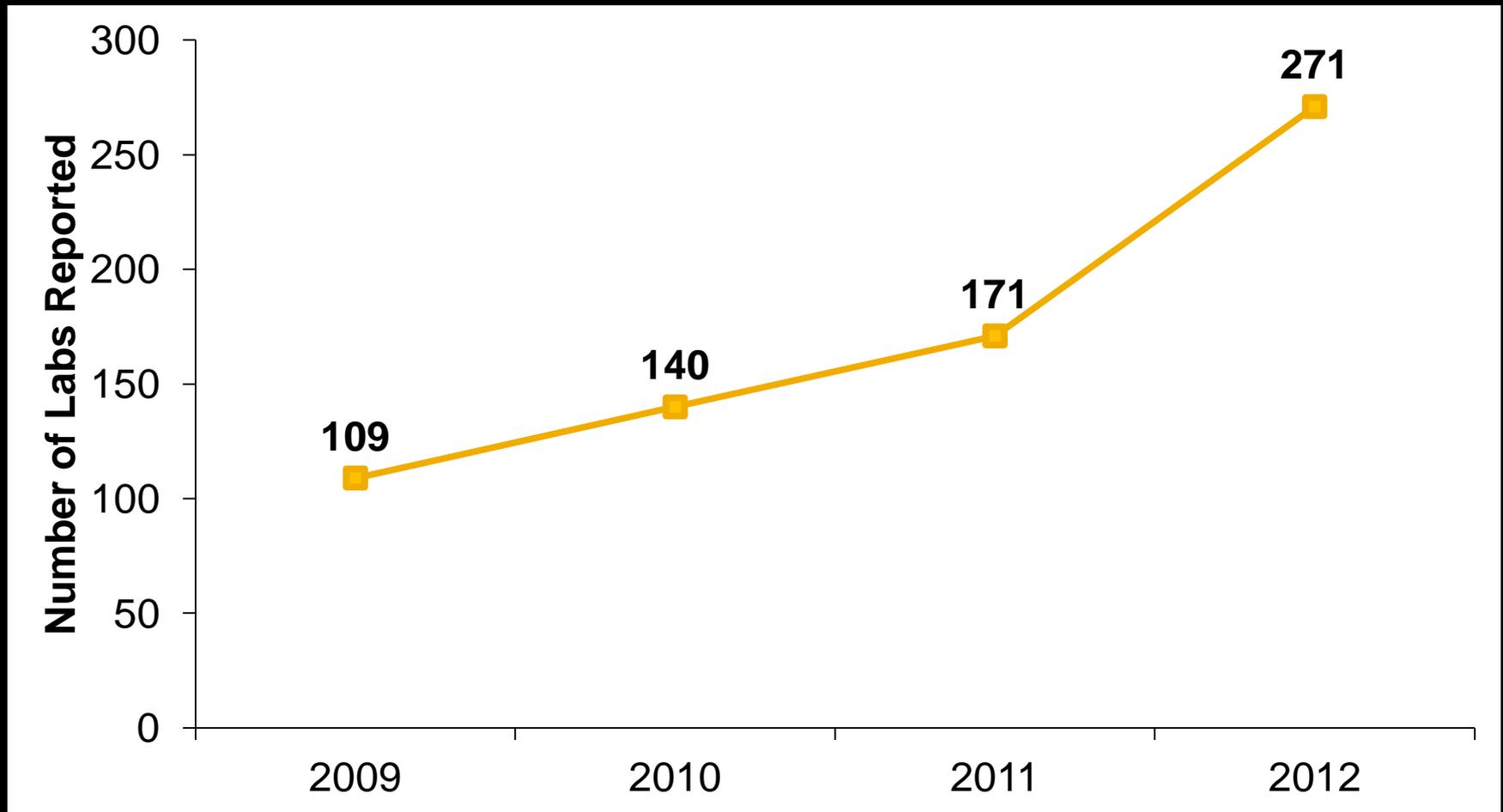
- “Meth” is an extremely powerful and addictive stimulant that affects the nervous system
- Street Names: **Speed, Meth, Crank, Chalk, Ice, Glass**



DEA



Methamphetamine Labs Reported to Public Health



Stimulants

- Indications of possible misuse:
 - Excessive activity, talkativeness, irritability, argumentativeness or nervousness
 - Increased blood pressure or pulse rate, dilated pupils
 - Long periods without sleeping or eating
 - Euphoria

Inhalants

- Sudden Sniffing Death Syndrome (SSDS)
- Inhalants are the only class of substance abused more by younger than by older teens (NIDA).



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Other Synthetics

- Bath Salts
- K2/Spice (synthetic marijuana)

Bath Salts

- Bath Salts are synthetic stimulant drugs
- **VERY DANGEROUS:** addictive and potentially lethal
- More potent than cocaine
- Not organic-made with chemicals
- They do not contain fragrant soaps or oils, yet they are packaged to seem so

Bath Salts

- Crystallized powder that can be white to brown, with shades in between and even speckled.
- Typically an attractive package about the size of a tea bag.
- The label says “Not for Human Consumption”
- Manufactured mainly in China or India. There are labs in the US...



Bath Salt Use in WV

- Bath Salts abuse and problems associated with abuse are increasing at an alarming rate.

Incidence of Bath Salt Exposures Reported to the West Virginia Poison Center 2009-2012

| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |
|---------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Bath Salt Exposures | 0 | 4 | 259 | 45 |

K2/Spice (synthetic marijuana)

- Synthetic drugs
- Synthesized to mimic effects of marijuana
- More potent than THC
- Not organic-made with chemicals (sprayed on plant material)
- When burned this substance usually has a pleasant odor...

K2 Nationally

- America's poison centers first received calls about "synthetic marijuana" in late 2009
- 80% of these calls placed from ER, compared to 20% regularly

Incidence of THC Homologs (synthetic THC) Exposures Reported to the West Virginia Poison Center 2010-2012

| | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |
|--|------|------|------|
| THC Homologs (synthetic THC) Exposures | 34 | 88 | 60 |

What does it look like?

Courtesy: DEA



Resources

- Alcoholics Anonymous 1-800-333-5051
- Narcotics Anonymous 1-800-766-4442
- Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255
- WV Prescription Drug Abuse Quit-line
1-866-987-8488
- WV Poison Control 1-800-222-1222

Contact Information

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