



Maryland Poison Center
University of Maryland School of Pharmacy

1-800-222-1222

Poison Prevention Press

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March 20-26, 2011 is Poison Prevention Week (PPW)

This year marks the 49th time PPW is being celebrated. Consider doing the following to make your world poison safe:

- Program 1-800-222-1222 into your mobile phones. Using number, you will reach a poison center 24/7 anywhere in the U.S.
- Request a poison information packet for your home, order educational materials for a group and use our home safety checklist to make sure your home is poison safe. Go to www.mdpoison.com
- Read product labels carefully every time you use a household product or medicine.
- Store products in their original containers.
- Call the poison center as soon as you suspect a poisoning or overdose

Did you know that...

- In 2010, the Maryland Poison Center answered ~36,000 human exposure calls, ~2,000 animal exposures and ~25,000 requests for poison or drug information?
- In 2010, over 70% of human exposure calls were managed on site, without needing a health care facility?

“Bath Salts”: Don’t Be Fooled By the Name

A new drug of abuse has hit the scene resulting in calls to poison centers in 43 states and Washington DC. Although the products are sold as “bath salts”, they are not the same as products we see in the health and beauty section of stores or in the mall. These are products sold on the Internet, or in gas stations, convenience stores and smoke shops. They sell for \$15-\$50 for a small bag or jar under names like “Red Dove,” “Blue Silk,” “Zoom,” “Bloom,” “Cloud Nine,” “Ocean Snow,” “Lunar Wave,” “Vanilla Sky,” “Ivory Wave,” “White Lightening,”

“Scarface” and “Hurricane Charlie.” There are other products containing the same drug being sold as “insect repellent” or “plant fertilizer.” Although the packages are labeled “not for human consumption,” most users snort the powder, but effects can also be felt if it is injected, smoked or eaten.

The products are thought to contain Methylenedioxypyrovalerone, or MDPV, which is not approved for medical use in the U.S. It can be compared to cocaine or methamphetamine because it has similar effects and is very addictive. The drug can cause increased blood pressure, increased heart rate, agitation, hallucinations, paranoia and violent behavior. Some users have become so paranoid that they have taken their own lives. Some users can’t sleep and when they do, they have vivid nightmares. Effects can last for days after using the drug. Like crack, the drug causes a strong craving for more despite the frightening effects.

Poison centers in the U.S. took 291 calls about “bath salts” in 2010 and have taken 469 calls as of February 14, 2011. Most of the calls have been concentrated in Louisiana, Florida and Kentucky. At this time, the Maryland Poison Center has taken fewer than five calls concerning “bath salts.” Louisiana, Florida and North Dakota have issued emergency bans of the product and several other states are looking at similar legislation. Senator Charles Schumer plans to introduce a bill that would add the drug to a list of controlled substances in the U.S.



Although “bath salts” do not appear to be a large problem in Maryland yet, parents should be aware of the products and get help right away if they suspect their child is using them. If any violent or paranoid behavior is noted, call 911 or take the child to the hospital right away.

