

R.U.S.H Drug Task Force

Harrisonburg Police Department
Rockingham County Sheriff's Office
Virginia State Police
Drug Enforcement Agency



For Immediate Release

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Recent Increase in Illnesses from Synthetic Marijuana

Harrisonburg, VA – The R.U.S.H Drug Task Force has recently seen an increase of illnesses as a result of the consumption of synthetic marijuana.

Since Monday, April 13, the Drug Task Force has been notified of five instances where individuals had a serious reaction to various forms of synthetic marijuana, causing them to be hospitalized.

“Anytime there is a pattern such as this it is vital that we notify the community to remind of the dangers of all drugs, particularly synthetic marijuana,” said Mark Campbell, Supervisory Special Agent with the Virginia State Police.

Often suppliers in other countries will alter the chemicals in synthetic drugs before distribution. The chemicals in synthetic marijuana are not always known to the consumer and have the potential to cause a severe health reaction.

The effects that have been seen this week are: shortness of breath; accelerated heart rate; muscle contractions; and seizure-like symptoms.

“People who may be inclined to use synthetic marijuana and other synthetic drugs should consider that these substances are not produced under the controlled conditions that legitimate pharmaceuticals are, and that users are at the mercy of unknown suppliers who have no regulatory oversight,” said Nazir Adam, MD, emergency physician with Sentara RMH Medical Center. “People need to consider the risks involved and avoid these substances altogether.”

Not only does the R.U.S.H Drug Task Force actively investigate the illegal sale and distribution of synthetic drugs, the office also works to educate and prevent individuals from ever consuming this harmful chemical.

Anyone with information about an individual or business selling synthetic drugs should contact the R.U.S.H. Drug Task Force at 540-434-1229 or RDTF@comcast.net.

*Who will notify you if an emergency-related event is happening in Harrisonburg or Rockingham County? Sign up to receive free alerts through the **Harrisonburg and Rockingham County Emergency Alert System** by visiting www.HREmergencyAlert.com.*

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