



MEMORANDUM

To: Illinois Coroners
From: Illinois Department of Public Health
Date: March 28, 2018
Re: Severe Bleeding among Synthetic Cannabinoids ('K2/Spice') Users

Since March 10, 2018, cases of severe bleeding have been reported to the Illinois Poison Center in persons who report using synthetic cannabinoids prior to their illness. Synthetic cannabinoid products, also known as K2, spice, legal weed/fake weed, and synthetic marijuana, among other names, are not typically detected on a routine toxicology screen, and patients who develop coagulopathy after use of these products will not necessarily have a positive drug test.

These patients may develop bleeding not from an injury and not otherwise explained, including nosebleeds, bleeding of the gums, bruising, vomiting blood, blood in urine or stool, or excessively heavy menstrual bleeding. To date, no deaths have been identified in association with these cases.

In an effort to understand the scope of this problem, the Illinois Department of Public Health is asking coroners to report suspect cases. If individuals are identified after death or at autopsy who show signs of suspicious bleeding as described above, coroners are encouraged to report the case to their local health department (LHD). If the LHD is not available, please notify the Illinois Department of Public Health at 217-782-2016 or 800-782-7860 after hours.