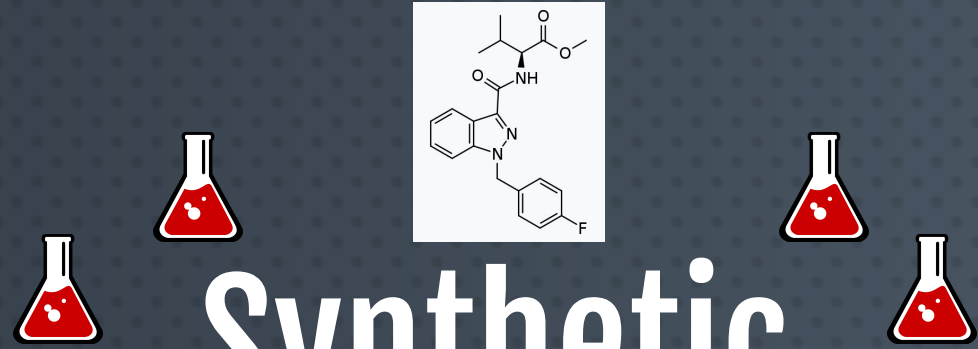


# Legality



Products that contain ingredients similar to the synthetic properties of cannabis are regulated in Canada under the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA)*.

All activities (eg. production, distribution, import, export, etc) are illegal in Canada



# Synthetic Cannabinoids

## What are they?

## References

### Alberta Health Services:

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/healthinfo/padis/hi-padis-synthetic-cannabinoids-faq.pdf>

**World Health Organization:** [https://www.who.int/medicines/access/controlled-substances/Fub\\_amb.pdf](https://www.who.int/medicines/access/controlled-substances/Fub_amb.pdf)

### Canadian Centre Substance Use & Addiction:

<https://www.ccsa.ca/sites/default/files/2019-05/CCSA-CCENDU-Synthetic-Cannabis-Bulletin-2014-en.pdf>

**CompoundChem:** <https://www.compoundchem.com/2015/05/26/cannabinoids/>

### Drug Policy Alliance:

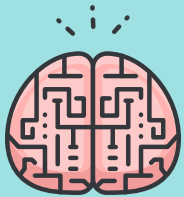
[http://www.drugpolicy.org/sites/default/files/Synthetic\\_Cannabinoid\\_Fact\\_Sheet.pdf](http://www.drugpolicy.org/sites/default/files/Synthetic_Cannabinoid_Fact_Sheet.pdf)



Interior Health  
*Every person matters*

Developed by the Harm Reduction Program, Population Health Services

Synthetic cannabinoids are designer drugs that bind to cannabinoid receptors in our brains. They may also have affinity for other receptors.



Cannabis is **NOT** the same as synthetic cannabinoids. However, both act as cannabinoid receptor agonists (activate the receptors).



Synthetic cannabinoids are often quite strong and vary in terms of type, quality and potency of chemical(s) in these products. Variations can occur from packet to packet of the same branded product.



Stronger

AMB-FUBINACA, a synthetic cannabinoid, is frequently detected in samples of illicit opioids tested all over BC.

In high doses it can also effect a person's breathing (slow the Central Nervous System).

They often cause unusual symptoms such as auditory/visual hallucinations, agitation and rapid heart rate.

Want to know what might be in your drugs?

Visit: [www.drugchecking.ca](http://www.drugchecking.ca) or [www.getyourdrugstested.com](http://www.getyourdrugstested.com)



## Harm Reduction Tips



- Start low - go slow
- Stay with a sober buddy
- If you are experiencing hallucinations, go somewhere that is lower stimulation or somewhere quiet
- If used unintentionally (eg. in your opioids) remember that the side effects will pass eventually
- Seek medical attention if needed, especially if you are experiencing severe symptoms as listed below
- Speak calmly and quietly if you are supporting someone who has used synthetic cannabinoids
- If you are supporting someone who has recently used synthetic cannabinoids offer to stay with them for a while - if in doubt call 911 for support

Side effects may vary because there is not a standard for quality, intensity, dose or type of synthetic cannabinoid. Many receptors may also be affected during use, contributing to the variety of side effects.

Therefore side effects may be mild to severe and include: dry mouth, euphoria, increased energy, increased appetite, dream like state or sense of relaxation, agitation, seizures, vomiting, aggression, paranoia, respiratory failure and loss of consciousness.



### Other side effects include:

Rapid heart rate

Sweating

Anxiety

Nausea

Hallucinations

Death



Synthetic cannabinoids can be a solid form, such as herbal material similar in appearance to cannabis. It can also be sold as a spray or liquid which are then added to dried herbs/plant matter. Synthetic cannabinoids are most commonly smoked but can also be ingested orally, such as through an infusion for drinking.



There are over 140 different compounds classified as synthetic cannabinoids. They are often sold under common names like **K2**, **Spice** and **Synthetic Marijuana**.

Side effects will begin to occur within 5-10 minutes of use and typically resolve within 6 hours. Sometimes side effects can last as long as 24 hours.

Looking for support with your substance use? Visit [Interior Health](https://www.interiorhealth.ca/YourCare/MentalHealthSubstanceUse/SubstanceUse/Pages/default.aspx)  
<https://www.interiorhealth.ca/YourCare/MentalHealthSubstanceUse/SubstanceUse/Pages/default.aspx>