



WHAT ARE THEY?

Many NPS were previously known as 'legal highs'. They are drugs which can be just as dangerous as other illegal substances, sometimes even more so. They can have many names – 'illegal legals', 'illegal highs', 'legals, herbal highs and more.



WHAT DO THEY LOOK LIKE?

They can be powders, crystals, pills, pellets, herbal mixtures, liquids and small pieces of paper (blotters).



KNOW THE LAW

The Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 made it an offence to produce, supply, offer to supply, possess with intent to supply, import or export (including over the internet) any psychoactive substance. Possession is not an offence, except in a custodial institution (such as prison). Supplying someone else, including your friends, could result in up to 7 years in prison and/or a fine. Certain products such as nicotine, alcohol, caffeine, food and medicinal products are exempt.



STRONGER THAN YOU THINK

Synthetic cannabinoids are usually smoking mixtures which are often sold in bright packets. They look like dried herbs or plant cuttings, which are sprayed with potent chemicals. The effects differ from cannabis, they are stronger and more unpredictable. Many people have reported unpleasant physical and mental side effects including paranoia and panic attacks.

KNOW THE SCORE

ABOUT NEW PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES (NPS) OR 'LEGAL HIGHS'



UNKNOWN RISKS

Some types of substance can be more potent and volatile than others and have different effects on people who take them. Many haven't had any safety testing, so it's impossible to know what effect they'll have.



HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

NPS are risky no matter how much is taken. The contents are often unknown so it's difficult for people to know what they're taking or how much is an active dose. Taking more than one drug at a time or taking with alcohol also increases the risk of dangerous side effects and overdose.



DANGERS OF OVERHEATING

Stimulant NPS can cause overheating and dehydration. Drinking alcohol, being in a hot club, dancing without taking breaks and not drinking enough water makes this worse.



THE EFFECTS

Some make you feel up, some make you sleepy and woozy and others make you feel trippy. After use, some people will have what's called a comedown where they can feel sick, anxious, low, bad tempered and paranoid.



LOOK AFTER YOURSELF AND YOUR PALS

Don't feel pressured into taking drugs – it really is OK to say no. If a friend has taken something and experiences bad effects, the quicker you can get them to medical help the better.



ASK FOR HELP IF YOU NEED TO.

Never be scared to ask for support or help. If anyone starts to feel unwell, it's always best to call an ambulance immediately. Leaving it can be fatal. For non-emergencies call **101**. For medical emergencies contact **999**. For non-urgent medical advice contact your GP or **NHS 24** on **111**.

WHERE TO GET INFORMATION, ADVICE AND SUPPORT.

For support in your area, search on scottishdrugservices.com
For free, confidential advice about drugs call the Know The Score helpline on **0800 587 587 9** (lines open 8am-11pm, 7 days a week).

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