

Emergency Rooms Reported 23,000 Bath Salts-Related Visits in 2011



U.S. emergency rooms reported almost 23,000 visits for synthetic drugs known as "bath salts" in 2011.

The findings come from the first national study to look at bath salts-related emergency room visits, according to *HealthDay*.

It was conducted by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

The report found 33 percent of these visits involved bath salts only, 15 percent involved bath salts combined with marijuana or synthetic marijuana, and 52 percent involved bath salts in combination with other drugs.

"Although bath salts drugs are sometimes claimed to be 'legal highs' or are promoted with labels to mask their real purpose, they can be extremely dangerous when used," Dr. Elinore McCance-Katz, Chief Medical Officer of SAMHSA, said in an agency news release.

Bath salts can be taken by mouth, inhaled, or injected. Adverse effects of bath salts include heart and blood vessel problems, depression, suicidal thoughts, psychosis, and death, according to SAMHSA.

In 2011, there were almost 2.5 million U.S. emergency department visits involving drug misuse or abuse.