

Substance Abuse Update

By Jim Grimm, MA, LCPC

The topic of substance abuse and addiction remains one of the most widespread issues across the United States and the world today. How would *you* answer the following question?

What will be the five most prevalent drugs of abuse emerging in the next 12 months?

If your answer is pot, heroin, methamphetamine, PCP and alcohol, you answered correctly! But are these drugs of abuse really *emerging* drugs? Just think about how long some of these substances have been around.

Heroin emerged in the late 19th century and is still with us today; the same is true of cocaine. Cannabis has been around for thousands of years, although it arrived much later in the western hemisphere. Amphetamines have been abused since the 1930s, PCP since the late 1960s, ecstasy since the 1980s, and prescription opiates since the mid-1800s. Alcohol has been around since the beginning of time. Just because the use of a substance is increasing within the white middle class in the United States, doesn't make it an emerging drug.

You might have heard of some of these newer drugs emerging on the streets today:

- "Bath Salts" or MDPV
- Spice or K2 (similar to amphetamines and cocaine)
- Nbombs (a psychedelic)
- Vodka Eyeballing (taking vodka in an eyedropper and putting it in the eyes to hide the smell of alcohol)
- Krokidil (a cheap imitation of heroin)
- Rockstar
- Mollys (MDMA – a form of Ecstasy)

Also, Performance Image Enhancing Drugs (PIED) such as steroids, are being increasingly used, not so much by body builders, but to achieve the look of male models shown in the media.

For those interested in chemical analysis: the "Bath Salts" category has now evolved into four basic types:

- synthetic cathinones (mephedrone, 4-MEC, etc.)
- 2c phenethylamines ("Nbombs" - related to mescaline; some created in the past to imitate MDMA)
- tryptamines (psychedelics related to psilocin and bufotenin)
- piperazines.

Reasons for the emergence of some of these new drugs is to replace the scarce MDMA or ecstasy, and to find other speedy upper drugs. This is an example of what is commonly referred to as drug replacement.

You can find knowledgeable staff and resources at Arbor Counseling Center to support almost any challenge you face. While addressing addiction or substance abuse can be a complex issue, Arbor Counseling Center has the staff to assist you with confidential evaluations, resources tailored to your individual needs, and ongoing support. Call Arbor Counseling Center today at 847-913-0393 for more information or to make an appointment.