

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

PRESS STATEMENT

THURSDAY MARCH 29, 2012

State Health Commissioners Orders a Stop to Sale of Synthetic Marijuana

New York State Health Commissioner Nirav R. Shah, M.D., M.P.H. has issued an order of summary action banning the sale of synthetic marijuana products in New York State. These substances, generally referred to as “synthetic marijuana”, consist of plant material coated by chemicals that mimic THC, the active ingredient in marijuana. These products are being sold as a “legal alternative” to marijuana in convenience stores, smoke shops, and tobacco stores with brand names such as “Spice”, “K2”, “Mr. Nice Guy”, and “Galaxy Gold.”

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo called upon the Department of Health to take action to ban the sale of these dangerous products.

The order states, “synthetic cannabinoids have been linked to severe adverse reactions, including death and acute renal failure, and commonly cause: tachycardia (increased heart rate); paranoid behavior, agitation and irritability; nausea and vomiting; confusion; drowsiness; headache; hypertension; electrolyte abnormalities; seizures; and syncope (loss of consciousness).”

The Commissioner’s order calls for sales and distribution of these products to cease immediately. And it calls upon local health officials to distribute the order and check for compliance.

Last week, the Commissioner sent special health alerts to local health departments, emergency departments and other health care providers to make them aware of the dangers of these products.

The order is available here (LINK) ATTACH.

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