

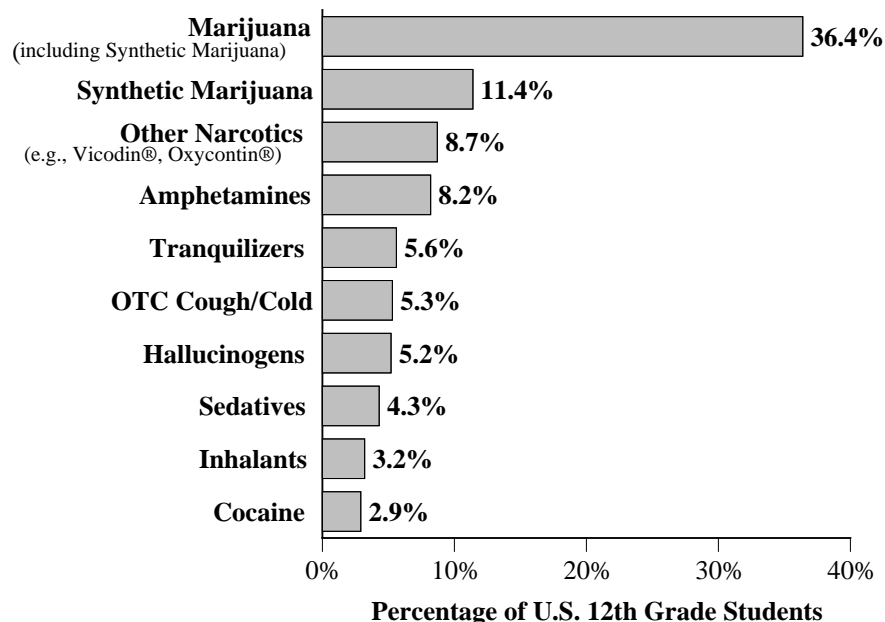
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

One in Nine U.S. High School Seniors Report Using Synthetic Marijuana in the Past Year

Marijuana and synthetic marijuana are the most prevalent illicit drugs used by 12th graders, according to recent data from the 2011 Monitoring the Future (MTF) survey. Slightly more than one-third (36.4%) of high school seniors reported using marijuana in the past year, including 11.4% who reported using synthetic marijuana, compared with less than 10% for all other illicit drugs (see figure below). Synthetic marijuana, an herbal drug mixture that usually contains synthetic cannabinoids, was readily available on the internet and in smaller retail establishments until it was scheduled by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) in March 2011 (see *CESAR FAX*, Volume 20, Issue 17, for more information about synthetic marijuana). Questions about synthetic marijuana use were included for the first time in the Spring 2011 MTF survey, and therefore measured use over a considerable period of time prior to the drug's scheduling. The authors note that "next year's survey results should reflect any effects of the scheduling by the DEA" (p. 5).

**Percentage of U.S. 12th Grade Students Reporting Past Year Use of Drugs*
Other Than Alcohol and Tobacco, 2011**
(N=approximately 14,900)



*Amphetamines include Adderall® (6.5%), Ritalin® (2.6%), Provigil (1.5%), methamphetamine (1.4%), and crystal methamphetamine (1.2%). Hallucinogens include salvia (5.9%), ecstasy (5.3%), LSD (2.7%), and PCP (1.3%). Other narcotic drugs used nonmedically include Vicodin® (8.1%) and Oxycontin® (4.9%). OTC Cough/Cold refers to use for the explicit purpose of getting high. Drugs with less than 2% prevalence were ketamine (1.7%), GHB (1.4%), Rohypnol® (1.3%), steroids (1.2%), and heroin (0.8%).

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from National Institute of Drug Abuse, *Monitoring the Future: National Results on Adolescent Drug Use*, 2011. Available online at <http://www.monitoringthefuture.org/pubs/monographs/mtf-overview2011.pdf>.