

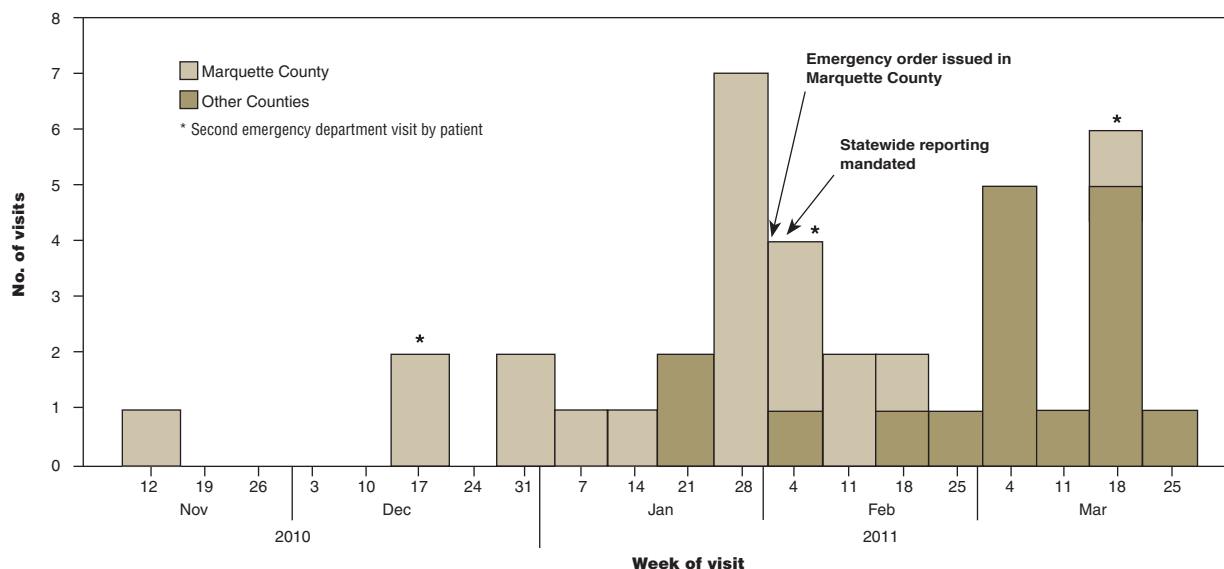
## BATH SALTS: A NEW DRUG TREND

“Bath salts” are a new and emerging designer drug that has recently surfaced as a significant problem in Ohio, as well as around the nation. These are not the typical bath salts used to spruce up your bathing ritual, but drugs sold as bath salts that have no legitimate use, intended for substance abuse. “Bath salts” are a synthetic stimulant that is being used by individuals nationwide, for the sole purpose of getting high. “Bath salts” are being used legally as a cocaine substitute and are found in several forms. They are available as capsules, tablets and in powder form to be injected, swallowed, snorted, or dissolved into food or drinks.

In many states “bath salts” are sold legally and can be found in gas stations, convenience stores, head shops, and on the internet. Websites selling the “bath salts” clearly state that the products are *Not for Human Consumption* and are *Not For Sale to Minors* but depict a party like none-other in the packaging and description. “Bath salts” street value seems to hover around \$20.00 for 500 mg. Steps are being taken on local, state, and national levels to prevent distribution of “bath salts.”

*“Because these products are relatively new to the drug abuse scene, our knowledge about their precise chemical composition and short-term and long-term effects is limited, yet the information we do have is worrisome and warrants a proactive stance to understand and minimize any potential dangers to the health of the public... We will continue to monitor the situation and promote research on the extent, pharmacology, and consequences of “bath salts” abuse. In the meantime, I would like to urge parents, teachers, and the public at large to be aware of the potential dangers associated with the use of these drugs and to exercise a judicious level of vigilance that will help us deal with this problem most effectively.”*

*-Dr. Nora Volkow, Director of the National Institute of Drug Abuse*



The figure above comes from a Center for Disease Control Report, in which 38 patient visits to emergency departments in Michigan during November 12, 2010–March 31, 2011 by persons who used drugs sold as “bath salts.” The greatest number of visits (7) occurred during the week of January 28, 2011. Overall use of “bath salts” seems to be on the rise.

## The Chemical Compound, MPDV

Little is known about the so called “bath salts” chemical composition, other than the fact that it contains methylenedioxypropylamphetamine (MPDV), which was first synthesized as part of a class of stimulants in 1969, and is currently unscheduled in the United States as it is not approved for medical use. It is a designer drug of the phenethylamine class, and is structurally related to cathinone, an active alkaloid found in the khat plant, methamphetamine, and MDMA, or ecstasy.

## Effects

While there are no known studies of the effects of MDPV on humans, effects have been reported by individuals arriving in emergency departments around the country. Effects of toxicity reported are similar to those of cocaine or methamphetamine. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported agitation, tachycardia or accelerated heart rate, paranoia, psychosis, delusions, hallucinations, hypertension, tremors, uncontrolled movements, dilated pupils, and violence as some of the reported short-term effects. Due to the recent emergence of the “bath salts” phenomenon, many of the long term effects are unknown.

## Bath Salts are Sold as:

Some common street names for “bath salts” include:

- *Ivory Wave*
- *Purple Wave*
- *Red Dove*
- *Blue Silk*
- *Zoom*
- *White Rush*
- *Bloom*
- *Cloud Nine*
- *Ocean Snow*
- *White Lady*
- *Vanilla Sky*
- *White Lightning*
- *Scarface*
- *Snow White*



Examples of “bath salts” packaging

## Legislation around “Bath Salts”

“Bath salts” have been able to remain on the market as long as they have primarily due to the ‘Not for Human Consumption’ label on their packaging. But manufacturing and sales of “bath salts” did not manage to fly under the radar of lawmakers for too long. “Bath salts” are still legal in much of the United States; action has been taken at all levels of government to combat the seriousness of this issue.

- Several cities in Ohio have passed ordinances to ban the sale and use of “bath salts.”
- The state fiscal year 2012-2013 biennial budget language included the addition of six synthetic derivatives of cathinone that have been found in “bath salts” to the list of Schedule I controlled substances. Schedule I indicates that a drug has no medicinal value but high potential for abuse, and is illegal to possess or sell.
- In the US, more than twenty states have banned “bath salts,” and others are heading in the same direction.
- US Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) has proposed legislation that bans the sale of “bath salts” and would add them to a list of federally controlled substances.

### Sources:

US Department of Justice  
Drug Enforcement Administration  
Congressional Management Foundation  
WebMD

National Institute on Drug Abuse  
Ohio Legislative Service Commission  
Centers for Disease Control  
American Association of Poison Control Centers