

Withdrawal syndrome after consumption of 'Spice Gold'

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A clinical report from Dresden supports the impression that "Spice Gold" is strongly addictive.

In the current edition of *Deutsches Ärzteblatt International* (*Dtsch Arzteblatt Int* 2009; 106[27]: 464-7), Ulrich S. Zimmermann, from Dresden Technical University, and his colleagues describe a young man who developed physical withdrawal symptoms after regular consumption of this designer drug, accompanied by a dependence syndrome.

Since 22 January 2009, "Spice Gold" has been subject to the German Narcotics Law. This means that production, free trade and possession are forbidden - but initially for only a year. There will be a permanent regulation at the end of the year. More information about "Spice Gold" is currently being collected. The authors' case report is a scientific contribution to this discussion.

When he came to the hospital, the patient had been consuming "Spice Gold" daily for eight months. Because of the loss of activity, he had rapidly increased the daily dose from 1 g to 3 g. He felt continuous craving for the drug and this caused him to carry on consuming it, in spite of the cognitive impairment it caused him. This led him to neglect his duties at his workplace and he was now threatened with unemployment.

He had already been forced to be abstinent for a time, because of a bottleneck in supplies, and this had triggered typical withdrawal

symptoms, such as internal unrest, tremor, palpitations, headache, nausea, vomiting, depression and desperation. These symptoms had abruptly disappeared when he started consuming spice once again. He suffered similar symptoms during drug withdrawal in hospital.

The authors interpret the symptoms as indicating a typical withdrawal disease, very probably due to the admixture of synthetic cannabinomimetics.

Source: Deutsches Aerzteblatt International

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