

New Dangers of 'Clubbing Drugs' on the Web

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Two University of Hertfordshire academics will release new evidence about the dangers of 'Spice' drugs today at the first International Psychonaut Web Mapping Conference in Ancona, Italy.

Professor Fabrizio Schifano and Dr Ornella Corazza from the University's School of Pharmacy will describe the pharmacological aspects of novel drugs of abuse and provide an overview of 'Spice' drugs at the conference which takes place as a result of a two-year European Commission-funded study to implement a regular monitoring of the World Wide Web in respect to novel recreational drugs.

'Spice' is a brand name for a herbal mix widely sold as an 'incense' or legal substitute for cannabis. It comes under a variety of names according to its 'flavours', such as 'Spice Diamond', 'Spice Gold', 'Spice Silver', '2Spicy', 'Spice of Life', etc, which according to users, are meant to produce subtly different effects.

According to initial results of the Psychonaut Web Mapping study on Spice carried out by Dr Corazza, the [drug](#) is accessible to children and young people, as there are no or very limited controls on any of the websites selling the drug.

This coupled with the fact that most of the new psychoactive compounds, including Spice, are unknown to health professionals, and very little information is available on the international medical database, monitoring of information about it on the Web is crucial.

“These results are alarming, particularly as [Spice](#) drugs are among the “three legal highs” that the Home Secretary, Alan Johnson has said will be banned by the end of the year,” said Dr Corazza. “It seems that legal restrictions and bans cannot be the only answer to the rapid diffusion of the new psychoactive compounds, which are much wider and more rooted in society.”

Professor Schifano, who has carried out extensive research into deaths from drug abuse and the link between the availability of these drugs on the Web, will also reveal new evidence about the potential of misuse of some well-known prescribing drugs.

Provided by University of Hertfordshire ([news](#) : [web](#))

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