

# Bath salts emerging as new recreational drugs

October 24 2011

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The use of bath salts as recreational drugs has greatly escalated in recent years. Researchers from the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma describe an incident of a man experiencing significant agitation, paranoia, and hallucinations who also exhibited violent behavior upon his emergency department arrival.

His case is not unique. Despite disclaimers of "not for [human consumption](#)" package warnings, according to the American Association of Poison Control Centers, calls for bath salt poisoning incidents have skyrocketed, with 1,782 since January 2011 compared with 302 in all of 2010. The inexpensive powdery substances with benign names contain stimulants not detectable through drug screens. However, they can produce a "high" along with increased blood pressure, increased heart rate, agitation, hallucinations, extreme paranoia, and delusions, not unlike the Oklahoma patient.

Treatment for ingesting these [bath salts](#) is sedation until the side effects wear off, along with supportive care. Although currently federally unregulated, 26 states have made these substances illegal. This new research was presented at CHEST 2011, the 77th annual meeting of the [American College of Chest Physicians](#) (ACCP), in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Provided by American College of Chest Physicians

Citation: Bath salts emerging as new recreational drugs (2011, October 24) retrieved 3 May 2024

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