

MEMORANDUM

To: Emergency Departments, EMS, Healthcare facilities, and Local Health Departments

From: Illinois Department of Public Health

Date: March 26, 2018

Re: Follow-up: Undifferentiated Vitamin K Dependent Coagulopathy Associated with Synthetic Cannabinoids ('K2/Spice')

This is a follow-up to the IDPH memo sent March 23, 2018. IDPH has received reports of two additional cases of severe bleeding due to a Vitamin K-dependent coagulopathy for a total of six cases reported since March 10, 2018. The cases live in three jurisdictions in the Chicago area and two are related to each other. Individuals in the general population may be at risk.

An investigation of this outbreak is currently ongoing. To date, five cases for whom clinical information is available report bleeding from multiple body sites and back pain. All six cases reported using synthetic cannabinoids, also known as K2, synthetic marijuana, fake weed/legal weed, spice, and genie, although many names are used. A common product used by the cases has not yet been identified.

Health care providers and health departments caring for and investigating unusual cases of coagulopathy should inquire about potential exposures to synthetic cannabinoids and rat poisons or rodenticides. Clinicians may consider ordering an anticoagulant panel on these patients. Several patients have been readmitted to the same or a different hospital due to a relapse, thus continued monitoring of INR is important.

Health care providers are asked to report suspect cases to their local health department (LHD). If the LHD is not available, contact the Illinois Department of Public Health at 217-782-2016. If your institution would like to discuss treatment and management guidance for these complicated patients, please call the Illinois Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222.

Local health departments are asked to share this memo with urgent or prompt care centers in their jurisdictions.