"The Number One problem we face..."

U.S. News & World Report

DESIGNER DRUGS

Researchers, narcotic detectives, physicians, underground chemists, black market dealers, and users speak out.

Crack
Dust Ecstasy MPTP
Crystal China White

M.M. KIRSCH

> I am convinced that there are different batches still being made and being made by former associates of that guy in Brownsville. Other people in other cities. We have intelligence telling us it's the same people—I can't reveal those sources . . . The whole thing has frustrated people in law enforcement. It's taken them offguard. The DEA was not prepared to deal with it. They don't feel it's important and they are adamant about believing it's not been seen since 1982. In general, law enforcement's not interested. They can't target it. They have no information. No knowledge. And informants on synthetics are non-existent. Meanwhile, it's not clear who is responsible for it. The Public Health Service? CDC can't get support. Right now, one million dollars appropriated by Congress to coordinate the federal effort for designer drugs has been held up by the Office of Management and Budget.
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> Researcher
> Centers for Disease Control
> January 1986

Using emergency scheduling, the DEA placed MPPP and PEPAOP into Schedule I effective August 12, 1985.

Dr. James Woodford, an Atlanta forensic toxicologist, and CDC chemist Robert Vogt have developed a quick and inexpensive color test for the neurotoxic MPTP byproduct. Chemists can check for MPTP contamination in drug samples or urinalysis by using a porcelain spot plate and the common Marquis reagent. It tests a vivid red.

Effects on Users

The CDC conducted extensive interviews in 1985 with individuals who had unknowingly used contaminated meperidine derivatives misrepresented as heroin, cocaine, and PCP. The original seven victims of MPTP poisoning suffering advanced Parkinson's disease were excluded and not part of the following statistics. The median age of individuals interviewed by the CDC was thirty-one years. Of 173 interviewed, eighty-three are considered in the report. Fifty-two are male, thirty-one are female. Thirty-eight are Hispanic, thirty-six are white, four are black, two Native Americans and other racial groups. Common early-stage symptoms reported by those exposed