



EARLY WARNING NOTIFICATION

Link suspected between deaths and new psychoactive substance: 4-methylaminorex, para-methyl derivative

What is happening?

The para-methyl derivative of 4-methylaminorex (4,4'-DMAR) is a new psychoactive substance (NPS) not currently controlled by drug legislation in EU Member States. The substance is a derivative of the stimulant drug 4-methylaminorex and is also known as '4-methyl-euphoria', '4-methyl-U4Euh', '4-M-4-MAR', '4,4-dimethylaminorex' or 'Serotoni'. The substance was first detected in the Netherlands in December 2012 and has since then also been found in Denmark, Hungary, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

In June 2013, Hungary reported eight deaths where 4,4'-DMAR was detected in combination with other substances such as alpha-PVP and mephedrone (substituted cathinone drugs) and alprazolam (a benzodiazepine). The United Kingdom has reported 18 deaths where 4,4'-DMAR has been detected in combination with other drugs. These deaths occurred between June and December 2013. A range of adverse effects associated with 4,4'-DMAR have been reported, including agitation, hyperthermia, foaming at the mouth, breathing problems and cardiac arrest. The use of other drugs in combination with 4,4'-DMAR appears to have been a factor in most of the fatalities recorded and, in many cases, investigations into the cause of death are still on-going. The parent drug from which this substance is derived – Aminorex – was once used as an anorectic medicine, but was withdrawn as it was found to cause pulmonary hypertension in some cases.

4,4'-DMAR has been found as a powder and in tablet form. The United Kingdom reported the use of the substance in house-party type environments in combination with other drugs such as cocaine, amphetamine-type stimulants, substituted cathinones, diazepam and cannabis.

Tablets containing 4,4'-DMAR have been noted to have a variety of logos, colours and shapes.

These tablets were seized in Hungary in 2013:



Green heart-shaped pills



Pink heart-shaped pills

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Tablet with "Playboy" logo



Tablet with "Star" logo



UK authorities have linked two types of tablets to fatalities in Northern Ireland:



Tablet with "Cherry" logo



Tablet with "Cross" logo

2

Sweden has confirmed the appearance of tablets containing 4-methylaminorex, para-methyl derivative bearing "ST 60" markings:



As noted in the SOCTA 2013 and the EU Drugs Market Report 2013, varying NPS continue to appear on the European market with increasing frequency. NPS currently constitute a relatively small share of the illicit drugs market, but lower prices, increased availability and quality are likely to attract more users to NPS. The consumption of NPS entails significant health risks and has led to deaths throughout Europe.