

Dane County EMS

Monthly Newsletter
ISSUE 01 APRIL 2018



SYNTHETIC
CANNABINOIDS
AND
'SPICE'

Coagulopathy with use of Synthetic Cannabinoids

Over the course of the last month, there has been an outbreak of bleeding complications in patients without known coagulopathies related to their use of synthetic cannabinoids. Current Wisconsin law prohibits the manufacture, distribution, delivery or possession of these synthetics, commonly known as “Spice”, “K2” or “Synthetic Marijuana”. They are produced illegally, and without regard to safety. The cases of bleeding complications linked to “Spice” use seems to be related to a contaminant known as *brodifacoum*, a long-acting rat poison. So far, over 100 people in Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin have been hospitalized, and at least 2 deaths have been attributed to its ingestion.

What you need to know: If you evaluate any patient with unexplained bleeding (nosebleeds, unexplained bruising, vomiting blood, bloody urine, heavy menstrual periods), please be sure to ask about use of synthetic cannabinoids. If you have anyone who discloses to you that they have been using synthetic cannabinoids, please be sure to report this to Emergency Department staff, as they will be screened for coagulopathy and increased bleeding times even without active abnormal bleeding. If you have any additional questions, please refer to the CDC website at: <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USCDC/bulletins/1e6dac3>

DANE COUNTY MONTHLY UPDATE:

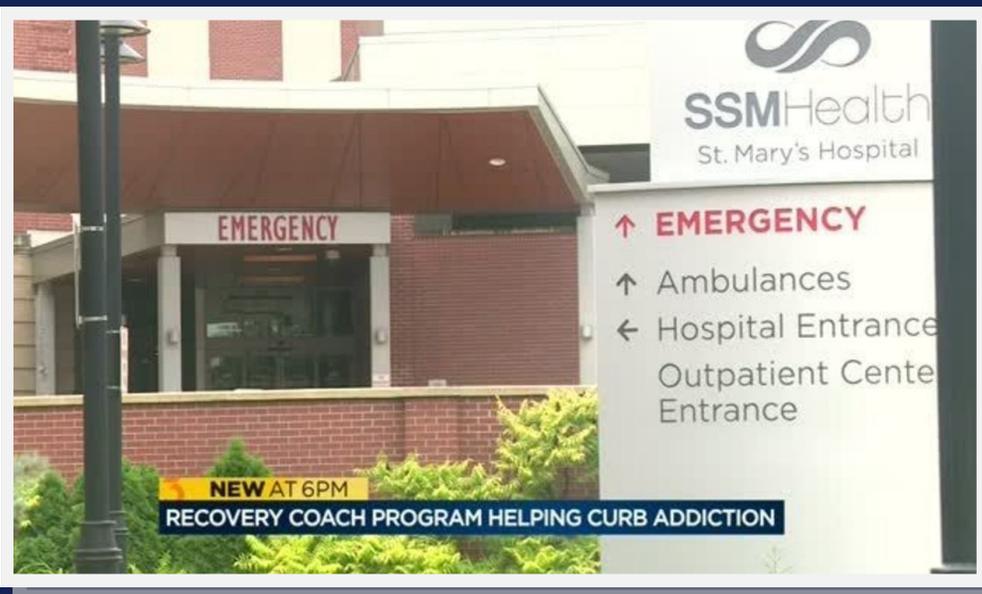
As part of an effort to improve communications and keep everyone “in the loop” on current and trending topics in out-of-hospital care, we have decided to update and enhance the monthly Dane County EMS Newsletter. We hope to integrate topics from the Dane County EMS Commission, Medical Advisory Subcommittee along with current topics of interest, distill them down to a quick reference and then distribute to all County EMS Personnel. Please send us any feedback you may have, as we want this to be useful for you, and help make your job as efficient as possible.

This month we will be covering “Street Tox” – covering both legal and illegal pharmaceuticals, and how they may impact your practice.

PHARMACEUTICAL SHORTAGES

If you haven't heard already, the rolling pharmaceutical shortages have continued, and now include many opioids and analgesics. It is uncertain when production will return to normal levels, but some estimates have put resumption of supply as far out as *June of 2019*.

What you need to know: Please continue to work on patient comfort and pain control as you always have. However, depending on the variable supply and stock on hand, *there is a possibility that an ALS crew may try alternative methods before administering opioid analgesics*. If the Paramedics are not able to administer medications immediately, please continue working with them collaboratively to achieve the best patient care possible. Additionally, until the current shortage is resolved it is important that patients aren't promised a treatment that they may not receive, for multiple external reasons.



RECOVERY COACHES IN THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT - ED2RECOVERY

Safe Communities of Dane County is a local non-profit coalition that works to save lives, prevent injuries and improve community safety. They have been extremely active in the battle against the opioid epidemic, and have started many new initiatives that are positively impacting the outcomes of patients struggling with addiction.

Safe Communities has built an innovative program that identifies a person in the Emergency Department who is struggling with opioid use and pairs them with a certified recovery coach. These recovery coaches have overcome opioid abuse and completed a coaching certification for this program. These coaches meet with the patients in the Emergency Department and encourage lifestyle changes in an effort to break the cycle of addiction during a receptive time, such as immediately after an overdose. To date, 87% of patients who are contacted by a recovery coach have gotten into treatment shortly after their intervention. These coaches are currently available to all of the UW and St. Mary's Hospitals, with Meriter and Stoughton expected to be online in the near future.

What you need to know: Patients who are evaluated and transported by EMS after an overdose will be screened for the ED2Recovery program, and if appropriate have a recovery coach assigned to them. Additionally, any patient who is identified as having opioid misuse will be offered an opportunity to meet with a recovery coach as well. *If you have someone who has been treated for an overdose or you suspect as having a problem with opioid misuse, please notify Emergency Department staff on arrival so they may screen and enroll the person.*

If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at mtlohmei@medicine.wisc.edu, or the Dane County EMS Office at (608) 266-5374 or meier.carrie@countyofdane.com.

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WHERE IS SPRING?

