



*Behavioral Health is Essential to Health
Prevention Works • People Recover
Treatment is Effective*

SAMHSA News Release

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PCP-related emergency department visits rose 400 percent over six years

Hospital emergency department visits related to the dangerous hallucinogenic drug phencyclidine, commonly known as PCP or “angel dust,” increased more than 400 percent between 2005 and 2011 (from 14,825 to 75,538 visits), according to a study by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

Overall in 2011, there were approximately 1.25 million emergency department visits related to the use of illicit drugs.

PCP is known to cause hallucinations similar to MDMA (also known as Ecstasy) and LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide), but unlike those drugs, in some cases, PCP has been associated with hostile behavior that resulted in violent episodes. PCP distorts perceptions of sight and sound and produces feelings of detachment.

The largest increase in PCP-related emergency department visits was seen among patients aged 25 to 34, who accounted for an increase of more than 500 percent from 2005 (5,556 visits) to 2011 (34,329 visits). In 2011, people in this age group represented nearly half (45 percent) of all emergency department visits involving PCP.

PCP-related emergency visits overwhelmingly involved males. In 2011, approximately two thirds (69 percent) of PCP-related ED visits were made by males.

“This report is a wake-up call that this dangerous drug may be making a comeback in communities throughout the nation,” said Dr. Peter Delany, Director of SAMHSA’s Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. “PCP is a potentially deadly drug and can have devastating consequences not only for individuals, but also for families, friends and communities. We must take steps at every level to combat the spread of this public health threat.”

SAMHSA’s Substance Abuse Block Grant along with a range of other programs promotes substance abuse prevention efforts in communities across the country.

The report, entitled *Emergency Department Visits Involving Phencyclidine (PCP)*, is based on findings from the 2005 to 2011 Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN). DAWN is a public

health surveillance system that monitors drug-related hospital emergency department visits and drug-related deaths to track the impact of drug use, misuse, and abuse in the United States. The complete survey findings are available on the SAMHSA Web site at:

<http://www.samhsa.gov/data/2K13/DAWN143/sr143-emergency-phencyclidine-2013.pdf> .

For more information about SAMHSA, visit: <http://www.samhsa.gov>

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is the agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that leads public health efforts to advance the behavioral health of the nation. SAMHSA's mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities.
