

Opinion: Designer drug eats addicts alive

Posted by [Jacqui Atkielski](#) On 07/12/2016

***CAUTION VERY GRAPHIC IMAGES**

HOLLYWOOD, MD -- Rumored to replace opiates as the top drug to abuse, this designer drug from Russia packs quite the punch. It's enough to rot the skin at the injection site.

With the street name Krokodil, the drug was first synthesized in the 1930s for medical use with the name [desomorphine](#). It has a similar affect to heroin without the cost, and can be made at home with a few ingredients from the hardware store and pharmacy.

After a [decade of reports](#) from Russia cataloging this designer drug, it's finally made it stateside with reports first coming up in 2013.

Some say the drug gets its name from the side effect of scaly, reptilian skin at the injection site. Others claim the drug name was derived from one of the drug's chemicals, alpha-chlorocodide.

Krokodil is also known as the zombie drug, with side effects such as a speech impediment, vacant gaze and erratic movements.

If the user misses his mark, the drug is injected into the surrounding flesh, causing blood vessels to burst and the tissue dies. With consistent use, the flesh at the injection site will start falling off the bone in chunks.

While several drugs are quickly and harshly addictive and physically damaging, krokodil sets a new standard for fast decomposition of the user's mind, spirit and body. The typical life span of a krokodil addict is one to three years.

A website claims that homemade desomorphine is highly impure and contaminated with various toxic and corrosive byproducts. I guess it would be with a recipe that includes paint thinner, gasoline, hydrochloric acid, iodine, and red phosphorous from matchbox strike pads. That sounds like a great cocktail, right?

The finished product is an acrid smelling yellow liquid that mimics the effects of heroin and other opiates at a fraction of the cost. After injecting the homemade brew into a vein, the high lasts 90 minutes to two hours.

According to [this website](#), there were few reports of krokodil use in the U.S. until September 2013 when a poison control center in Phoenix, Arizona, apparently received inquiries about the product.

Additional reports have surfaced from Illinois and Oklahoma. However, as of October 2013, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) has stated that they are skeptical that krokodil has crossed American borders.

The DEA notes that they have not seen any cases of it, and nothing has been turned into their laboratories. To have official confirmation, the DEA would require a drug sample. Users in America may unknowingly buy krokodil off the streets under the assumption they are buying heroin.

Drug-enforcement officials in the U.S. say fears of an imminent krokodil epidemic are 'overblown,' but it's difficult to not be alarmed by a drug that leaves such nasty marks on its victims.

I could not find any recent reports other than website pointing to cases from 2013. I can't imagine why someone would want to try something so potent. While it appears that this drug can overtake the country, there has not been published and verified information available online. Who would want to willingly look like a zombie?

America doesn't have a krokodil problem, [this website claims](#). It has a heroin and painkiller problem. Those drugs are widely abused, and they're far more destructive than krokodil. Flesh-eating zombie drugs just happen to be more interesting to write about because it sounds new and scary.

There's nothing inherently wrong with reporting on krokodil: the drug does exist, after all, and desperate junkies in the United States are probably using it, albeit not at the rate that other media sources would have the community believe. What's wrong is knowingly over-hyping the latest phony drug epidemic. Does anyone remember the bath salts epidemic?

I've had my say, now what's yours? Let's share.

[Photo credits to The Huffington Post](#)

Contact Jacqui Atkielski at j.atkielski@thebaynet.com.

Copyright © 2019 thebaynet.com. All rights reserved.