



Elks National Drug Awareness Program

Press Release

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There have been lots of headlines in the last few weeks on Krokodil and its appearance in the US. According to media reports, there have been two reported cases in Arizona and three in Illinois. Some drug abuse professionals in the US doubt Krokodil will become popular here because of the wide availability of cheaper drugs such as black tar heroin and Oxycotin. However, as a result of our continued efforts in reducing the diversion of prescription pain killers, we are seeing an increase in heroin use. If Krokodil is cheaper to produce and referred to as "poor man's heroin," it's possible we may see more of it in the U.S.

As with many of the new synthetic drugs of abuse, there is limited research and/or information available on long-term effects. Most of the information is gathered by users or those in contact with users. Below you will find a short summary of what I was able to gather on Krokodil.

What is Krokodil?

Medical name: Desomorphine. Desomorphine is an opioid (a synthetic narcotic that has opiate-like activities but is not derived from opium) first patented in 1932 by the United States. It's a derivative of morphine that has sedative and analgesic effects and is 8-10 times more potent than morphine. It is classified as a Schedule I substance under the federal Controlled Substances Act. Schedule I means:

1. The drug or other substance has a high potential for abuse.
2. The drug or other substance has no currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States.

3. There is a lack of accepted safety for use of the drug or other substance under medical supervision.

The name Krokodil comes from the word crocodile and was named as such because of the greenish and scale-like skin condition that occurs as a result of injecting the drug. At \$6 to \$8 a syringe, it's roughly three times cheaper than the price of heroin.

How is it produced?

Krokodil is produced using over-the-counter codeine-based pills and mixing them with gasoline, paint thinner, hydrochloric acid and red phosphorous (scrapped from the tips of matches). The ingredients are boiled, distilled, mixed and what remains is a caramel colored liquid that can be injected.

Prevalence of use began in 2007 in Siberia and spread throughout the Russia. In 2011 the Russian Federal Drug Control Services confiscated approximately 65 million doses of Krokodil.

Krokodil is also referred to as: Waling Dead, Crocodile, Krok and Zombie Drug.

Effects of Krokodil:

- High lasts from 1-1.5 hours and is similar, but more powerful, than the effects of heroin
- Causes flesh to rot from the inside out
- Skin becomes scaly; blood vessels burst causing the surrounding tissue to die
- Results in gangrene and amputations
- Exposed bone
- Kidney and liver damage
- Rotting teeth
- Blood poisoning
- Brain damage
- Death; average lifespan of users is 2-3 years, 3 year expectancy after first use

Withdrawal symptoms:

- Could last as long as 30 days
- Painful due to the blood vessel destruction and tissue damage

Articles and Resources:

[The Curse of the Crocodile: Russia's Deadly Designer Drug](#) Time World 2011

[Krokodil: The drug that eats junkies](#)(Independent, UK June 2011)
www.krokdildrug.com

[Krokodil, the Drug That Eats Your Flesh: 5 Fast Facts You Need to Know \[WARNING: GRAPHIC\]](#) (September 2013)

[DEA Now Monitoring Krokodil, a Deadly Morphine Derivative](#) (Fox News 2011)

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