**Drug alert**

**Pentylone in orange ‘Nike tick’ pills**

**The pills contain both pentylone and MDMA and are described as orange-coloured, brick-shaped tablets with a ‘Nike tick’ design. Pentylone is also circulating in other forms.**

**Pentylone is a ‘synthetic cathinone’ that’s potent and unpredictable**

Pentylone is a type of stimulant called a **‘synthetic cathinone’**. Synthetic cathinones can produce similar effects to more common stimulants like methamphetamine or MDMA (ecstasy), but cathinones appear to be **more potent** (smaller amounts produce strong effects). **People who have used synthetic cathinones** report that they produce **less euphoria and psychedelic effects** compared with MDMA, and that these effects **wear off more quickly**. This can lead to people taking more, increasing the risk of negative effects and toxicity.

**Higher doses** of synthetic cathinones can lead to long periods of sleeplessness and muscle twitching, increased risk of agitation, paranoia and hallucinations, and toxic effects such as overheating and heart problems.

**Synthetic cathinones are being sold as MDMA in various forms, linked to hospitalisations**

There have been a number of recent cases in Victoria where **people requiring emergency care** have reported using MDMA, but blood tests have shown synthetic cathinones. Cathinones detected recently in Victoria include pentylone, dipentylone, dibutylone, dimethylone, eutylone and methylone. In most of these cases the cathinones were apparent **adulterants** in products that also contained MDMA. In others, people had been mis-sold cathinones as **substitutes** for MDMA. Synthetic cathinones may appear as **crystals, powders, tablets or capsules**.

Consuming synthetic cathinones with **other stimulants** – such as MDMA in the orange ‘Nike tick’ pills – will increase the risk of toxic effects. Using cathinones with **psychedelics** like LSD (acid) will increase the risk of dysphoria (bad trip), agitation, and behavioural disturbances that place people at immediate risk.

Stimulants can also interact with a range of **medications**, including those used to treat depression and anxiety. Commonly used medications that may interact with stimulants and increase the risk of toxic effects include **‘SSRIs’**, **‘SNRIs’** and **‘TCAs’**. **Always seek information about your medications** before mixing with other substances.

**Reduce the risk of harm**

If you experience adverse drug effects, or are present when someone has an unexpected reaction, **seek help immediately by calling Triple Zero (000)**. Do not take more of the substance.

All alcohol and other drug use comes with risks, so:

* **Be aware** that other false or contaminated drug products may circulate in Victoria, even if no specific warning has been issued about them.
* Make sure you’re in a **safe environment with people you trust**.
* **Remember**, even ‘pure’ drugs can produce serious side effects and death and can interact dangerously with medications/pharmaceutical drugs. Get the facts at: [adf.org.au/drug-facts/](https://adf.org.au/drug-facts/).

Contact **Harm Reduction Victoria’s DanceWize team** for anonymous support and education from peers: [hrvic.org.au/dancewize](https://www.hrvic.org.au/dancewize).

If you or someone you know needs help with alcohol or drug use, call DirectLine on 1800 888 236 or visit [directline.org.au](https://www.directline.org.au/) for information and support to access treatment.