

46 Factsheet DrugWatch

Benzo Fury

Overview

Analysis of Benzo Fury usually finds it to contain the chemical 6-(2-aminopropyl) benzofuran (6-APB) or its related isomer 5-APB but using standard analysis methods it is impossible to differentiate between 6-APB and 5-APB. Little is known about the pharmacological or toxicological differences between the two isomers if any. 6-APB is an analogue of the class A drug MDA and has similar effects to MDMA (Ecstasy). The name comes from the benzofuran ring in the chemical structure and should not be confused with benzodiazepines, which are minor tranquilisers.

As with many branded products, some test analysis of Benzo Fury has shown that it can contain other substances such as D2PM (Diphenylprolinol) and sometimes simply caffeine. RedNet suggest pellets have contained varying doses of 6-APB mixed with caffeine plus magnesium stearate and/or glucose as a cutting agent. From an interview conducted by Lifeline with an online vendor, it is estimated that between 1 million and 1.5 million pellets of Benzo Fury (6-APB) have been sold in UK.

History

Benzofuran substances were originally researched in the early 1990s as potential antidepressant and therapy enabling drugs.

Appearance

It can be sold in pill, gel capsule, pellet or white or tan grainy powder form. The powder form generally appears to be sold under the chemical name 6-APB.

Cost

Pellets cost approx £10 each, powder form costs approx £36 per gram. The unit price decreases significantly with large quantities. Up to 50% price reductions on online distributor websites were being advertised prior to the temporary banning of Benzo Fury on 10th June 2013.

Routes of administration

Benzo fury is often consumed orally, either by swallowing pills, pellets or capsules, wrapping powder in a cigarette paper (bombing) or by mixing in a soft drink. The powder form can be

snorted although oral appears to be the preferred route by most users as users report nasal use can be unpleasant and painful.

Oral dosages

Threshold	30-50mg
Light	40-60mg
Common	50-100mg
Strong	80-130mg

Pellets or gel capsules are reported to contain a dosage of 100mg although this is unconfirmed.

Please note that these dosage levels are for guidance only and not meant to reflect any consistency in the products on sale.

Patterns of use

Patterns of use appear to be similar to drugs such as MDMA. Some users may re-dose to top up effects but there appears to be less compulsion to re-dose than other research chemicals.

Onset of effects

This can vary from 15 mins to 1 ½ hours depending on how the drug is taken, typically a nasal dose will come on more quickly than an oral one. Users often report the effects come on in waves.

Typical effects and side effects

Physical:

- Rushes
- Increased heart rate
- Increased blood pressure
- Increased body temperature
- Chest pains/ Palpitations
- Dilated pupils
- Sweating
- Teeth grinding
- Jaw clenching
- Dry mouth
- Increased thirst
- Sleeplessness/ insomnia
- Difficulty with urination
- Kidney pain
- Liver damage
- Nausea and vomiting
- Headaches
- Suppressed appetite
- Eye jitters (nystagmus)

Mental:

- Feeling of stimulation and excitement
- Euphoria
- Empathy
- Perception of increased energy
- Alertness
- Urge to talk
- Sexual arousal

- Visual and auditory hallucinations (hearing and seeing things)
- Anxiety
- Paranoia
- Panic
- Poor concentration
- Mental confusion
- Poor short term memory

Duration of effects

Likened to an MDMA type experience, Benzo Fury tends to reach its peak within 2-3 hours from an oral dose and then will plateau for an average period of 4 hours. Coming down is described by users as gradual with effects lessening in intensity but with effects having the potential to last up to 14 hours or more from the initial dose.

After effects

After effects can be felt up to 24 hours or more, during this time users may find it difficult to sleep. Like other stimulants some users report experiencing a comedown, where they may feel in a low mood or experience flu-like symptoms and general tiredness/lethargy. This typically happens a day or two after use, which some users will call the "Tuesday blues".

Long term effects/known harms

Benzo fury is a relatively unknown substance and indeed the active ingredient can vary. Little is known about the long-term effects and potential harms. With 6-APB being structurally similar to MDA, one could expect the risk profile would be similar and thus risks of overstimulation of the central nervous and cardiovascular system could be a concern.

Legal Status

Benzo Fury was brought under a Temporary Class Drug Order from 10th June making it illegal to supply, import or make. Benzo Fury will be subject to the order for 12 months whilst its harms are further investigated by Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs. Those caught making, supplying or importing Benzo Fury will face criminal sanctions of up to 14 years' imprisonment and an unlimited fine.