



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MDMA -- the drug popularly known as "Ecstasy" -- will be temporarily outlawed as of July 1, 1985, it was announced today by John C. Lawn, Acting Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

The emergency measure, signed by Lawn earlier this week because of the increasingly widespread abuse of the drug, will place MDMA into Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act. Schedule I, the most restrictive of the five categories established by the federal drug law, indicates that a drug has a high abuse potential, no accepted medical use and no accepted safety for use.

"All of the evidence DEA has received shows that MDMA abuse has become a nationwide problem and that it poses a serious health threat," Lawn explained. "The administrative scheduling of MDMA has been underway since July 1984, and will continue. This emergency action is a stopgap measure to curb MDMA abuse until the administrative process can be completed."

Gene R. Haislip, head of DEA's Office of Diversion Control, said that public hearings on the original scheduling proposal have been set for June 10 and 11 in Los Angeles and July 10 and

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11 in Kansas City. A third hearing will subsequently be held in Washington, D.C.

"These hearings will determine the future status of the drug, such as whether it is placed in Schedule I," Haislip said. "In the interim, DEA is establishing expedited registration procedures to assure that legitimate research into the effects of MDMA can continue uninterrupted."

Haislip pointed out that research soon to be published indicates that a very similar drug, MDA, destroys nerve terminals in the brain.

"Since MDA and MDMA are believed to affect the brain in a similar manner, it is likely that MDMA will also cause brain damage," he said. "Drug treatment programs have already reported that people are asking for help because of multiple doses of the drug. A California psychoanalyst, who admittedly had a heart condition, died shortly after taking 200 milligrams of MDMA."

MDMA's chemical name is 3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine. It is found in tablet, capsule and powder form that sells from \$8 to \$20 a dosage unit or \$70 to \$100 per gram. The average dose is between 50 and 110 milligrams. MDMA, which is made in clandestine laboratories, is also called MDM, XTC, Adam, Essence, Cocaine or MDA.

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This is the second time that DEA has used the temporary emergency scheduling authority permitted by the Comprehensive Crime Control Act of 1984. The first time occurred in March 1985, and was directed against the so-called synthetic heroin drug 3-methylfentanyl.