



## **For Immediate Release: - What is the concern with Molly?**

Friday, September 13, 2013

In response to media coverage about recent Boston area drug overdoses, the North Reading Community Impact Team has received several inquiries about the drug "molly." We hope that residents find the following information useful.

### **Growing Concerns over the Use of Molly**

If you've heard those around you talking about Molly, but you have yet to meet her, it may be that there is no real Molly after all. With posters asking "Where is molly?" and the speculation over Madonna's concert last year when she asked, "How many people in this crowd have seen molly?", it's apparent that molly is no stranger to young people. Despite the innocent moniker, molly is the nickname for the psychoactive drug MDMA. It is a Schedule 1 Drug and illegal in the United States.

Traditionally, molly was found in pressed ecstasy pills and was the substance responsible for feelings of euphoria. Yet ecstasy pills can be laced with just about anything, including caffeine and methamphetamines. Molly, on the other hand, is the powder form of MDMA and believed to be much purer. Since users think that they're getting the real deal, they feel justified in taking the recreational drug.

### **How Molly Works**

Molly works directly on the brain by creating a flood of neurotransmitters like serotonin, dopamine and norepinephrine. What the user feels is complete euphoria, a surge of energy and elation. The high usually lasts 3 to 4 hours. Users report that unlike ecstasy, coming down from MDMA isn't nearly as difficult. Still, people say that they become a bit depressed when the roll is over and can't wait to do it again, the exact point where addictive behaviors start to form.

While it's true that molly can come in the form of pure powder MDMA, the market is changing. Various substances, such as mephedrone, methylene and MDPV can also be sold as molly. At The River Source, we find that molly users believe that the drug is an innocent way to have fun. The belief that molly is "pure" or "natural" makes users feel as if they're doing nothing wrong. However, the chemical

composition of molly is often altered, and even MDMA in its purest form can be dangerous.

## **Molly Carries Risks for Users**

What drug addiction counselors want people to know is that no one can be certain as to what environment the chemicals in molly are made in and what could be added to the powder. Taking molly has just as many risks as any other illegal drug, especially when it's combined with alcohol or other drugs. While there are still few negative withdrawal symptoms to report, the Drug Abuse Warning Network shares that there was a 123 percent increase in the number of emergency room visits from 2004 to 2009 from MDMA.

Even in its purest form, MDMA can cause a rapid heart rate. It also causes its users to have a distorted view of reality. Because users on molly are often moving around and dancing, they could also experience other side effects such as dehydration, overheating and severe exhaustion. MDMA also depletes the neurotransmitters in the brain, so users may also feel a bit depressed for several days after taking the drug. What's most concerning is that just like any other recreational drug, you need more and more of molly to get the same effects.

## **Acceptance toward Molly**

Molly isn't exactly hard to come by. It's found at raves, dance clubs and concerts, places where people are dancing and listening to loud music. Many young people have admitted that all it takes to get the drug is a simple text message to a supplier. The general widespread acceptance of molly is just another example of how our society is becoming more tolerant of drugs. For instance, even though marijuana is a Schedule 1 controlled substance, many people don't classify marijuana as a drug. With 17 states having legalized marijuana for medical use, and several other states for recreational use, one can understand this ongoing debate.

Molly fits right into this category because people believe it's safe, pure and has very few negative side effects. In fact, emergency visits for MDMA-related complications only account for 4 percent. However, addiction treatment centers such as The River Source are seeing a different picture. Molly is just like any other type of illegal substance; it's habit forming and you need more of the drug to get the same effects. There are health risks involved, and taking molly causes people to have a distorted view of reality, resulting in riskier behavior.