

Australia: Ecstasy loses its shine

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Jagged pill ... new designer drugs detected

Ecstasy, one of the most popular "recreational" drugs in Australia over the past two decades, is becoming less popular with regular users, consistent with global trends, say the authors of a new report from the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC) at the University of New South Wales.

The bulletin from the [Ecstasy](#) and Related Drugs Reporting System - Australia's largest central monitoring system of the use of these drugs - found the number of ecstasy users nominating it as their [drug](#) of choice had fallen significantly since 2005 and the number using the drug weekly had halved.

Chief investigator Dr Lucy Burns says that while the declining use of ecstasy was welcome, Australia, like Europe, is already seeing the

emergence of an increasingly diverse range of synthetic chemicals.

"We have not to date seen any evidence of widespread use in [Australia](#) of these newer synthetic drugs, many of which are available on the internet," says Dr Burns.

"However, the sheer rate at which these and other chemicals could be synthesised and distributed presents significant challenges both from a health and a law enforcement perspective."

Designer drugs which have been picked up by the survey, albeit in small numbers, include mephedrone and BZP, a central nervous system stimulant that reportedly has more side effects than amphetamines.

More information: Read more at the NDARC [website](#).

Provided by University of New South Wales

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