

Physical characteristics of illicit amphetamines in the Northeastern region

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ABSTRACT

This paper described a study on the physical characteristics of illicit amphetamines in 8 provincial cities of the Northeastern region during 1980-1982. The symbol on the tablets was recorded then the colour, weight and the diameter of the tablets were carefully examined. Various symbols in respective order of sampling frequency were found. These are the tablets with a horse-head above the word "LONDON" on one side and a central split line on the other side (H1), those with a star above a horse-head on one side with a bat on the other side (H2), and those with "TABLOID BRAND" on with the symbol H1 were found in every city studied except one city which almost totally bore the symbol H2. The illicit amphetamines with the identical symbol varied in colour at different sampling time. The coefficient of variations of the weight and diameter of the illicit amphetamine tablets, which were purchased each time from different distribution sites in the same cities, were as low as 1-2%. Beside, the illicit amphetamines which were purchased from different distribution sites in the same provincial cities and in the same months were also of the same weight and diameter, but the illicit amphetamines which were purchased in the same provincial cities and in different months differed in weight and diameter with statistic significance. The findings indicate that the illicit amphetamine markets in the Northeastern region are probably divided among many suppliers. The illicit amphetamine production seems to apply many dies even when the symbols on the tablets remain the same. The presence of the same symbols compressed from different dies in the successive months or even in the same months, suggests that the supplier of each symbol probably have many sources of production.

Key words : Amphetamine, Physical characteristics, Stimulant

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