

## Parent Information About ‘Lean’ Misuse

**Following reports of increased ‘Lean’ misuse, we are sharing this information with parents to increase their awareness of what ‘Lean’ is and how they can recognise its use.**

Lean—also known as purple drank, purple lean, dirty sprite, and lean drink—is a combination of prescription-strength cough medicine, soft drinks, and hard, fruit-flavoured sweet products (Often imported from USA). The prescription cough syrups used to make lean drink are dangerous because they often contain codeine, an opioid drug. Another active ingredient in some prescription cough syrups is promethazine, an antihistamine with potentially sedating effects that, in combination with opioids, could markedly impair motor functioning.

Using Lean, especially for a prolonged period, can have numerous negative effects on the body.

- It slows down aspects of mental and physical health.
- It can cause significant damage to teeth
- Regular users have also reported urinary tract infections, troubled breathing
- It can cause irregular heart rates and seizures.
- It can cause dependence

You don't have to use Lean for a long time to begin experiencing some of the negative effects of the medication. Some of the common effects of Lean are:

- Trouble with cognitive skills and difficulty producing words properly.
- slurred speech and sound like they are intoxicated when they speak.
- memory impairment, which typically only affects the short-term memory.

When Lean is mixed with alcohol or other depressants (including cannabis) their combined effect could lead to serious injury, coma, or death. People who take the medication in large doses might experience severe sedation that can last for 3-4 days.

As Lean is not available to purchase in the UK, it is often purchased from dealers via the ‘Dark Web’. As such, it is impossible to know exactly what such a product will contain.

**All Codeine based products are controlled substances under Class B, making them illegal to possess. If parents find substances that they don’t recognise, they should contact 101 and share that information with the police, who can support in safely destroying substances.**

**Also, if a parent is concerned that their child has consumed a controlled substance, they should seek immediate medical advice.**

**For further information, or if you have any concerns please contact your local Health Authority for advice.**

