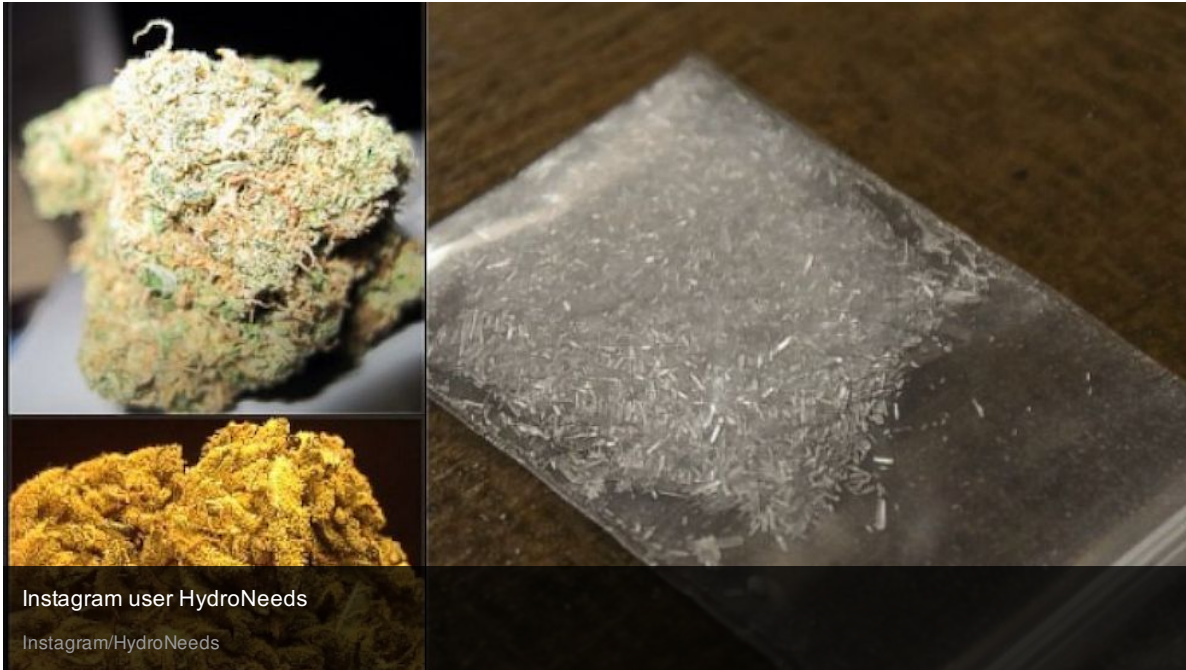


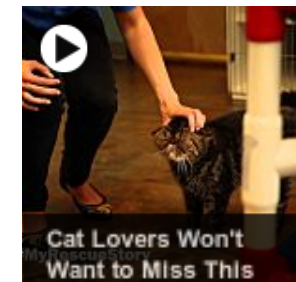
# Did You Know People Are Dealing Drugs on Instagram?

Sept. 26, 2013  
By Zara Stone (@AlmostZara)

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Instagram is turning into a place where you can see anything you want. Now you can BUY things as well... or at least that's what some enterprising drug dealers would have you believe.

Going mad on Molly. Being ecstatic with Ecstasy. Looking scary with methamphetamine. The world of drugs is varied, and those who partake come from all backgrounds. Many of them are social media users. Instagram is the place to go for atmospheric- Amaro filtered sunset shots and Lo-Fi kitten captures.

Plus hardcore drug use. Both taking and selling.

You've probably heard about Molly, Methadone and mephedrone, but where do you stand on 2CI or 2C-B? These drugs are relatively new to the U.S. club scene and now apparently are considered Instagram-worthy.

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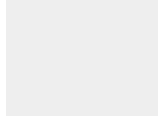
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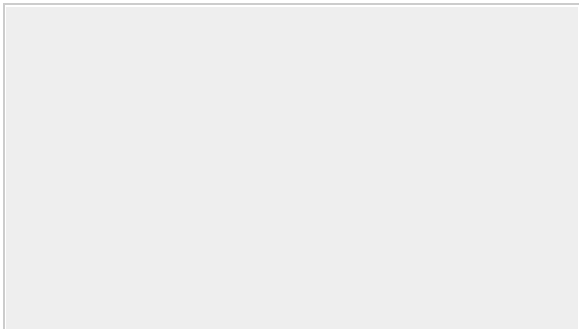
*"If you like it then you should a put a filter on it."*

The hashtags #2CI and #2cB bring up numerous illicit substances, all filtered appropriately pretty. Leaving aside the psychology of why you'd choose to broadcast your drug use on Instagram, or the safety of advertising it, people seem to be using Instagram as an illicit drug-dealing marketplace, akin to Silk Road (the dark side of the web, not the famous trade route).

Today, 562 photos come up for 2CI on an Instagram search using Webstagram. The search for 2C-B creates 1,268 results. Other terms used for the drug are nexus, bromo and 2C-E. To be clear, not ALL pictures are drug related, and 2C-B and 2C-E do differ from each other in some

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ways. However, even with this taken into consideration, a large number of images are drug related, either showcasing people out consuming or displaying their purchases.

Or selling drugs.

**What's in stock?!?!**

- ◆ Less than 400 Norco(10mg hydrocodone) [\$4/pop]
- ◆ 1 Pint of Actavis [\$350]
- ◆ 1 Ounce of Avon Kush [\$125]
- ◆ 1 Ounce of homegrown[\$125]
- ▼ 8 Ounces of IBD(indoor blue dream) [\$175/ounce]

**Kik me! @HydroNeeds**

User HydroNeeds not only is showing supposed images of the 2CI drug but also offering to sell it. His image is captioned, "I have <2OZ of #Mephedrone that I just got in. Haven't seen this stuff since 09'. Very good quality. Serious inquires Kik me. If you don't know what "mephedrone, mcat,

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**Oscar Pistorius' Ex: 'It Could Have Been ...'**

bubbles, or meow meow" is, then don't bother. This stuff is intense"

( Kik is an app-based private messaging service- like What's App - that allows private messages to be shared.)

When contacted about purchasing items, payment was suggested through MoneyPak- an untraceable prepaid credit card. Delivery would have been carried out through FedEx.

You might think that this drug might be far outside your social circle, but its use is growing, and and you might be surprised at how prevalent it's getting.

But just what are **2CB and 2CI**, and what do they do to your body?

2C-B (or 2CB) is an ecstasy derivative drug, created in 1974 by biochemist Alexander Shulgin (always known as the creator of MDMA) for psychological research. It then gained popularity in Europe in the early eighties as a party drug. What 2CB and its derivatives does is combine the "highs" of ecstasy with a psychedelic experience, a combination upper/hallucinogenic, if you will. The name reflects the chemical compounds, 4-bromo-2,5-dimethoxyphenethylamine. For short, 2C-B. This family of drugs also includes 2CI, 2CT-7 and 2CE.

### **So what are the risks of 2CB and 2CI drugs?**

The problem here is that no one really knows. Due to the nature of the popularity of other more accessible mainstream drugs, research into 2CI and 2C-B is limited. Some of the issues that arise are the same as Ecstasy and LSD users might experience. This includes paranoid thoughts and behavior, shortness of breath, panic attacks, hyper sensitivity and users are at risk when mixing with alcohol. Obviously, there are some plus points and these include heightened sexual arousal, stimulation and out-of-body experiences.

It became illegal to possess or sell 2C-B in the U.S. in 1994. At the time, it was not missed as many other alternatives were readily available, but with the current crackdown on Molly and Meth, it looks like 2CB - and the associated 2C-E and 2CI, are making a comeback. The reason I say "associated" is that the chemical compounds that create 2C-B derivatives like 2C-E and 2CI aren't necessarily illegal and thus can be purchased separately and then combined. This legality status is changing, and in 2012, an amendment was made to **Schedule 1 of the Controlled Substances**



Act to include 9 different 2C chemicals.

### **The dangers are also growing.**

Last year [the Guardian](#) reported a number of people were hospitalized after taking 2C-B and last month Time reported on the [death of people](#) who had taken 2C-E recreationally.

The 2C drugs fall into something the 2013 [United Nations World Drug report](#) classifies as NPS. This stands for **new psychoactive substances** and this is the category the 2CB and its family fall under.

The report shared that the use of NPS' increased 50% from 2009-2012, which is pretty substantial.

“There has certainly been an explosion of abuse of the 2C drugs, mostly by teenagers and those in their early twenties,” said DEA spokesperson Dawn Dearden.

### **So, what does this have to do with Instagram?**

Instagram might seem like an odd place to turn for drug purchases, but taking into consideration that the [main users of Instagram](#) are 18-34 year olds,(also the main recreational drug user age) it doesn't seem so strange. Once upon a time, drugs were bought and sold in the confines of dark clubs and rotten stairwells, but now everything is about virtually connecting, and running the drugs through a filter provide a level of removal and security for those concerned.

Yes, you leave a digital trail, but that's become almost a redundant fear as there are so many people online, that it's almost impossible for the police to keep track of them. Dealers can gain access to a large clientele, users can find a way to get their kicks and photos of drug taking.. well, that's just not smart.

However, though the DEA is aware that drugs are being traded on social media, in some ways dealers have an easy route, “Keep in mind that the DEA doesn't go after the small user, “ said Dearden. “Our intent is to go after the biggest and the baddest of those operating in this market.”

Thus, the small time dealer could easily fall under the radar.

"It's not our job to monitor them," said Derden. Often, this would fall under the local police, but as social media has no "obvious" locality, it's often an untapped - and unmonitored resource.

"People using social media as a way to sell drugs and communicating with buyers is something that we know happens," said Dearden. "It happens with cellphones and social."

Sure, user accounts can be tracked and traced, and many Instagram users include GPS data with their uploads. Under the Instagram terms of service they say that, "You may not post violent, nude, partially nude, discriminatory, unlawful, infringing, hateful, pornographic or sexually suggestive photos or other content," and drug usage and dealing clearly falls into this category. We reached out for comment and received no response.

Even were Instagram to ban certain #2ci and #2Cb hashtags, it's clear that users would get more creative and choose other labels, so while the company could do more, equally it's an unsolvable problem.

### The final question is one everyone will have to answer on their own: Would you buy drugs on Instagram?

*Update: Instagram has responded to this story with this comment: "Instagram has a clear set of community guidelines which make it clear what is and isn't allowed. We encourage people who come across content that makes them uncomfortable to report it to us using the built-in reporting tools next to every photo or video on Instagram."*

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