

Requesting country: France

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## IMMINENT THREAT

# 2,4-DINITROPHENOL (DNP)



### RE-EMERGENCE OF AN UNAUTHORIZED WEIGHT-LOSS PRODUCT PRESENTING A LETHAL RISK FOR THE CONSUMER

**Date of discovery:** October 2014

**Place of discovery:** Orleans

**Country:** France

**Circumstances of discovery:** The Central Office for the Protection of the Environment and Public Health (OCLAESP, law enforcement agency for public health issues) was informed by the French health authorities that, in October 2014, a young man had been hospitalized for severe intoxication after consuming a weight-loss product called 2,4-Dinitrophenol (DNP).

In early 2015, the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), an INTERPOL partner, alerted the General Secretariat that an accredited anti-doping laboratory had received an unknown substance to be analysed, which was identified as 2,4-Dinitrophenol (DNP). The French authorities, as well as the WADA science department, would like to draw attention to the re-emergence of this drug which is used to improve body image and performance, particularly in the bodybuilding world.

**Description of object / device:** 2,4-Dinitrophenol (DNP) is a dangerous and well-known substance, which is also used as a base material in the composition of certain explosives.

This product was used in the 1930s to stimulate metabolism and induce weight loss, but was quickly withdrawn because of severe side effects and, specifically, its high risk of mortality which resulted in the deaths of numerous patients who had taken the product.

In the 1980s, medical teams attempted to reintroduce DNP as a nutritional supplement. However, it was once again withdrawn following the death of a patient, and the doctor responsible was convicted.

Over the past several years, and even very recently, DNP has resurfaced on the black market.

The product's toxicity and the significant risk of mortality associated with its consumption remain a cause for concern for pharmaceutical and medical specialists. Not only is consuming the product dangerous in itself, but combining it with other performance-enhancing drugs, such as

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clenbuteral, multiplies the risks for the consumer.

Besides being inherently dangerous, the risks of consuming DNP are compounded by the fact that DNP is usually produced in clandestine laboratories in questionable sanitary conditions. Manufacturers not only have a poor grasp of the preparation process, but they also expose consumers to risks of potential overdose.

Furthermore, the WADA 2015 Prohibited Substances and Methods List considers DNP to be a prohibited substance in the S0 category: *“Any pharmacological substance ... with no current approval by any governmental regulatory health authority for human therapeutic use (e.g. drugs under pre-clinical or clinical development or discontinued, designer drugs, substances approved only for veterinary use) is prohibited at all times”*.

DNP is ordinarily sold as a plain yellow powder – either in loose form or more commonly in capsules – or even in cream form.

In the present case, the DNP had been ordered from the website “drmusclepharmaceuticals.com” and sent by post to the consumer’s address. The following information was printed on the box:

***Health and Beauty Turmeric capsules Extra Strength 125 mg each capsule. Contains 125 mg of Turmeric Powder DO NOT USE IF SEAL IS BROKEN.***

In order to divert the attention of law enforcement agents, the DNP distributors take advantage of the product’s resemblance with a spice (yellow powder), to falsely claim that the capsules contained turmeric.

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**Additional information:**

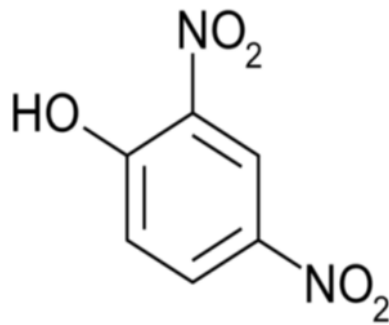
Health authorities or law enforcement agents who handle this product should be aware of the precautions to follow:

- Highly unstable chemical product that may decompose under the effect of various factors, causing fires and explosions;
- Product is toxic by inhalation, skin contact, and if swallowed;
- Product is toxic for the environment.

Characteristic symptoms may be an indication that this product has been consumed:

- Excessive (or unusual) perspiration;
- Bright yellow-coloured urine;
- Pale yellow skin colour.

**Chemical structure of 2,4-DINITROPHENOL**



**Capsules (source: Internet)**



**Powder (source: Internet)**



**Packaging (source: Internet)**

