

2,4-Dinitrophenol (DNP)

The dangers of DNP and the National Food Crime Unit's role in reducing the health risk to the public.

2,4-Dinitrophenol (DNP) and compounds including sodium dinitrophenolate were added to the list of regulated poisons under the Control of Explosives Precursors and Poisons 2023.

As of 1 October 2023, a member of the public wishing to import, acquire, possess or use DNP must hold an Explosives Precursors and Poisons (EPP) licence.

It is now a criminal offence to sell this substance to members of the public without a valid licence.

DNP is a highly toxic industrial chemical. It has been illegally sold as a diet pill for weight loss. DNP is poisonous to humans and can cause death, as well as other serious physical side effects.

Health risks of DNP

The effects of DNP can be catastrophic and cause serious harm to health. Taking DNP has resulted in a significant number of deaths in the UK.

Other side effects of DNP include:

- nausea
- vomiting
- restlessness
- flushed skin
- sweating
- dizziness
- headaches
- rapid breathing
- an irregular heartbeat

Cataracts and skin lesions may also develop, as well as damage to the heart and nervous system.

Please contact a doctor or medical professional immediately if you have taken DNP.

Illegal sale of DNP as a diet pill

It is now a criminal offence to sell this substance to members of the public without a valid Home Office issued EPP licence.

DNP is a yellow powder, usually made into tablet or capsule form. The pills have previously been sold online, on social media, in a food supplement shop, or by people at the gym.

Some people wrongly believe taking DNP will enhance their physical appearance or cause weight loss. Sellers may falsely advertise its use, despite being aware of its dangerous effects.

Reporting the selling of DNP

If you suspect a business is breaking the law report the crime immediately to your [local police force](#) or [Crimestoppers](#). If you have information about a business that may be non-compliant in relation to DNP you can report it to through the [National Food Crime Unit](#) or [the Home Office](#).