

Cheltenham Communities That Care

MARIJUANA EDIBLES

What are Marijuana Edibles?

Marijuana edibles are normal looking food items that have been infused with cannabis, cannabidiol, THC (the psychoactive component of marijuana), and/or CBD (the non-psychoactive component of marijuana).

Many marijuana edibles have been designed to resemble popular brands in both physical appearance and packaging. This can include candy (lollipops, gummies, candy bars, etc.), beverages (soda, water, energy drinks, etc.), desserts (brownies, cookies, ice cream, etc.), snack food (popcorn, etc.), burgers, salads, cooking oil, butter, and more.

If an edible contains THC, especially in high levels, it can be dangerous to a person's physical and mental health. To avoid exposure, check packaging carefully **BEFORE** purchasing and consuming food, especially in states where recreational marijuana is legal.

Look closely! Warnings could be written in fine print, labeled as "THC infused" or "High", represented as a symbol (such as marijuana leaves), or hidden within the ingredients list (cannabis, CBD, cannabidiol, tetrahydrocannabinol, or THC). Don't let terms such as "natural" fool you!

Why Do People Overdose on Edibles?

It can take anywhere from 30 minutes to four hours to feel the impact of edibles, an impact that can leave a person under the influence for up to 12 hours, with residual effects lingering up to 24 hours.

The actual amount of time it takes a person to feel the effects of an edible depends on a number of factors: if they have recently eaten other food, their rate of digestion, their tolerance level, their metabolism rate, and the amount of THC in the product.

Because the body reacts slowly to edibles, a person might eat more than the recommended serving size in hopes of having a faster reaction. But by doing so, they could harm themselves and require medical attention.

A person could also accidentally eat more than the recommended serving size. One edible can often contain several servings of THC, causing actual portion sizes to be only a fraction of the product. For example, one cookie may be seen as a single serving. In terms of THC content, 2.5mg (sometimes less) is a single portion. If one cookie contains 250mg of THC (which is common), then the actual recommended serving size would be 1/10 of that single cookie. Imagine what could happen if an unknowing child ate an entire THC-infused cookie!



Marijuana's Health Risks to Children and Teens

- Altered perception
- Slurred speech
- Apnea (not breathing for 10 seconds or longer)
- Coordination problems
- Difficulty concentrating
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Excessive tiredness
- Heart problems
- Impaired brain function
- Inability to drive safely/operate motor vehicles
- Intoxication
- Learning difficulties
- Memory impairment
- Anxiety, panic, and/or paranoia



KJRH.com

Regular chips or edibles?

If you're confused, imagine the impact on a child who is quickly grabbing a snack!



NJ.gov

WARNINGS

- Marijuana edibles **are not** monitored by the Food and Drug Administration, leading to industry-wide inconsistencies in how ingredients are listed, the strength of the THC used, and the amount of marijuana infused into products.
- Some prescribed medications can **negatively react** with marijuana, leading to possibly dangerous side effects.

What Should You Do If Your Child Eats an Edible?

If your child eats a marijuana edible, ask what they ate and how much. Then, immediately contact the toll-free poison control hotline at **1-800-222-1222**. If your child is having a reaction, call **911** or take your child to an emergency room.

Teach Your Child to be Safe

- Have calm and nonjudgmental conversations with your child about the potential harms of edibles.
- Share and discuss reliable prevention information.
- Encourage your child to avoid marijuana use.
- Do not allow edibles in your home.
- Warn against driving (or being a passenger with someone who is) under the influence of substances.
- Prepare your child before they go to parties, sleepovers, dances, concerts, and other events. Remind them that they can always ask you to pick them up if they feel uncomfortable.

Resources

- **Center For Disease Control:** cdc.gov
- **Commonwealth Prevention Alliance:** CommonwealthPreventionAlliance.org
- **The Council for Southeast PA, Inc.:** Councilsepa.org
- **Food and Drug Administration:** fda.org
- **American Academy of Pediatrics:** HealthyChildren.org
- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration:** samhsa.gov