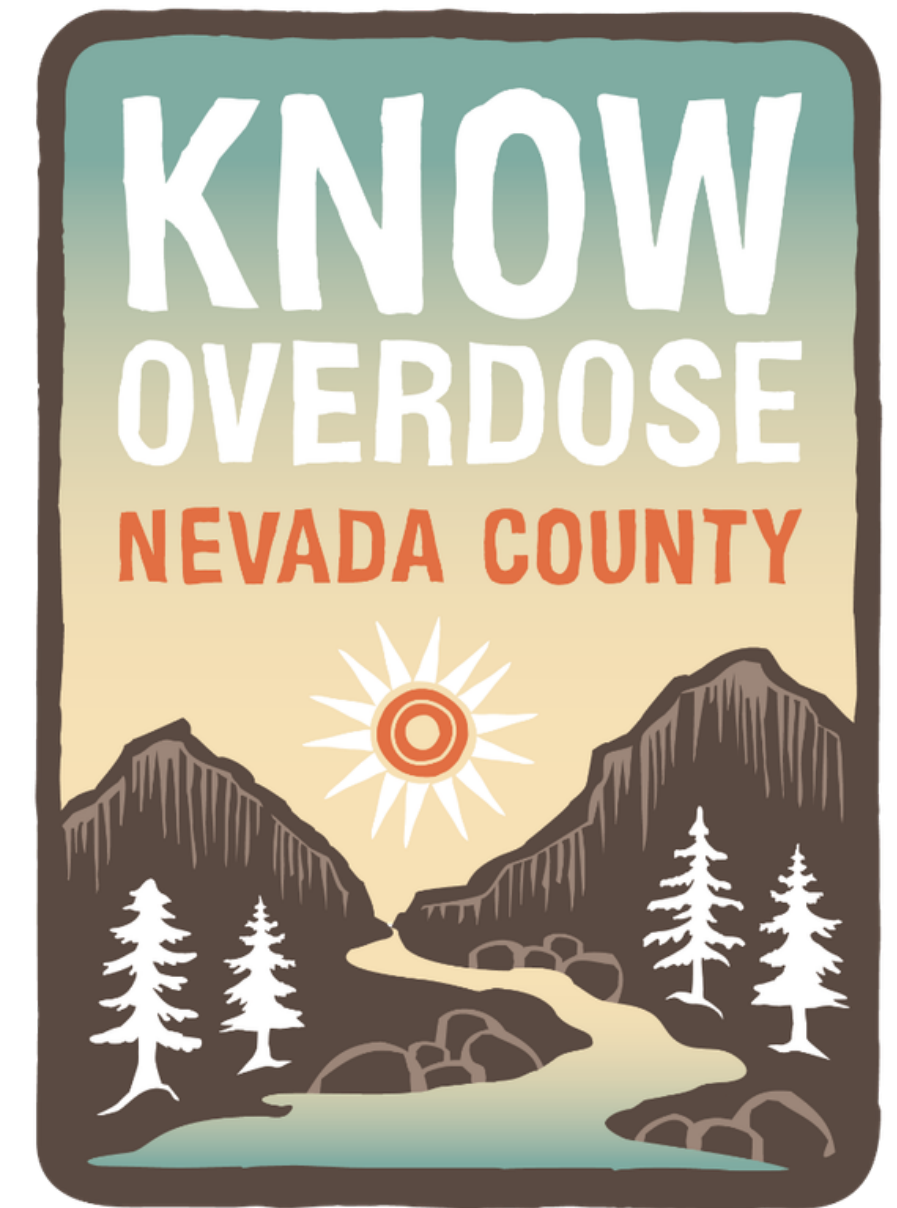


Kratom & 7-OH

Understanding an emerging drug trend

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Learning Objectives

- Understand what Kratom and 7-OH are
- Know the health risks of Kratom and 7-OH
- Understand the laws and regulations around Kratom and 7-OH
- Describe how to stay safer when using Kratom and 7-OH
- Understand key resources to learn more



What Is Kratom?

- Leaf of *Mitragyna speciosa*, used traditionally in Southeast Asia for energy, labor stamina, pain, and social use
- In the U.S., sold as powders, capsules, teas, gummies, “energy shots,” and online supplements
- Contains multiple alkaloids (especially mitragynine & 7-hydroxymitragynine) that act as partial opioid receptor agonists, producing dose-dependent stimulant → opioid-like effects
- 7-OH usually only ~2% concentration in Kratom



What Is 7-Hydroxymitragynine (7-OH)?

- A more potent metabolite/derivative of kratom
- Some U.S. retail products contain synthetically concentrated 7-OH (up to ~98% concentration), creating strong opioid-like effects
- Often marketed as “plant-based,” but effects can be comparable to potent opioids in high doses



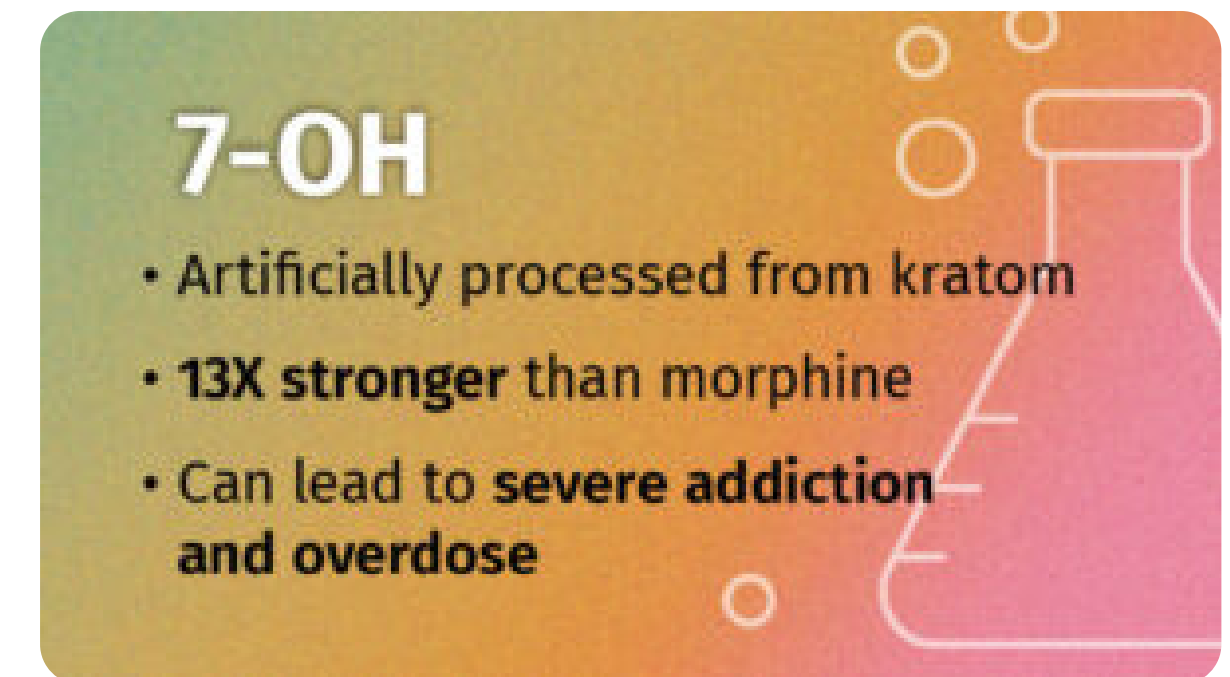
What Do Kratom & 7-OH Do?

- Low doses (~1–5g): Mild stimulant effects (increased energy, sociability)
- Moderate–high doses: Sedation, pain relief, euphoria, decreased anxiety — similar to opioids
- 7-OH is significantly more potent at the opioid receptor compared to *mitragynine* leaf
- Kratom act on receptors that monitor breathing, heart rate, blood pressure, mood, sleep, and digestion, among other bodily functions



Why Is it an Emerging Public Health Issue?

- Rapid growth in retail sales (gas stations, smoke shops, online)
- Products vary widely in purity, dose, and composition — user experiences are unpredictable
- Some people report using kratom to self-treat chronic pain, anxiety, depression, or opioid withdrawal — often due to barriers to healthcare access
- Kratom and 7-OH products carry risks: overdose, dependence, inconsistent labeling, and contamination
- Many users perceive kratom as safer because it's “natural,” but scientific evidence does not support proven medical benefits



Ventura County Public Health

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What Are the Health Risks?

- **Short-Term Effects**
 - Nausea, vomiting, constipation, dizziness, sweating, dry mouth, itching, increased urination
- **Long-Term Risks**
 - Dependence and withdrawal risk
 - Liver toxicity
 - Heart rhythm changes
 - Weight loss and nutritional impacts
 - Psychosis or hallucinations (high-dose/long-term)



Long Beach Health Department

What We Know About Overdose Risk

- Rising overdose deaths in multiple CA counties including LA, Santa Barbara, and Yolo
- Higher overdose risk with 7-OH than Kratom because of potency
- Most deaths involved polysubstance use (especially alcohol, opioids, sedatives)
- Kratom-involved overdoses often relate to respiratory depression when combined with other depressants
- Underreported due to limited post-mortem toxicology
- Naloxone may help reverse overdose



What Makes 7-OH Particularly Concerning?

- Can be synthetically concentrated far beyond naturally occurring levels
- Stronger opioid effect → higher risk of dependence, overdose, and withdrawal
- Frequently marketed without clear labeling, dosage guidance, or testing
- Consumers may believe they are purchasing “herbal supplements” when products may contain laboratory-concentrated 7-OH



Los Angeles Public Health

What Is the Legal Landscape?

- DEA announced plans just weeks ago to temporarily schedule 7-OH as a Schedule 1 drug, meaning no medical benefit and high risk of dependence
- Illegal to manufacture or sell for consumption in California and federally (Sherman Law; FDA position; not GRAS by Environmental Health)
- CDPH has issued letter that all kratom/7-OH products for consumption are illegal statewide



What Is the Legal Landscape?

- CDPH is working with ABC, tax agencies, local health departments, and law enforcement to address illegal sales and manufacturing
- Local ordinances have been passed in Los Angeles, San Diego, Oceanside, Newport Beach, Napa, Orange Riverside, San Mateo and Fresno
- Variation in local ordinances can cause public confusion
- Removal of adulterated food/dietary supplements containing kratom/7-OH from retail and manufacturing environments continues statewide

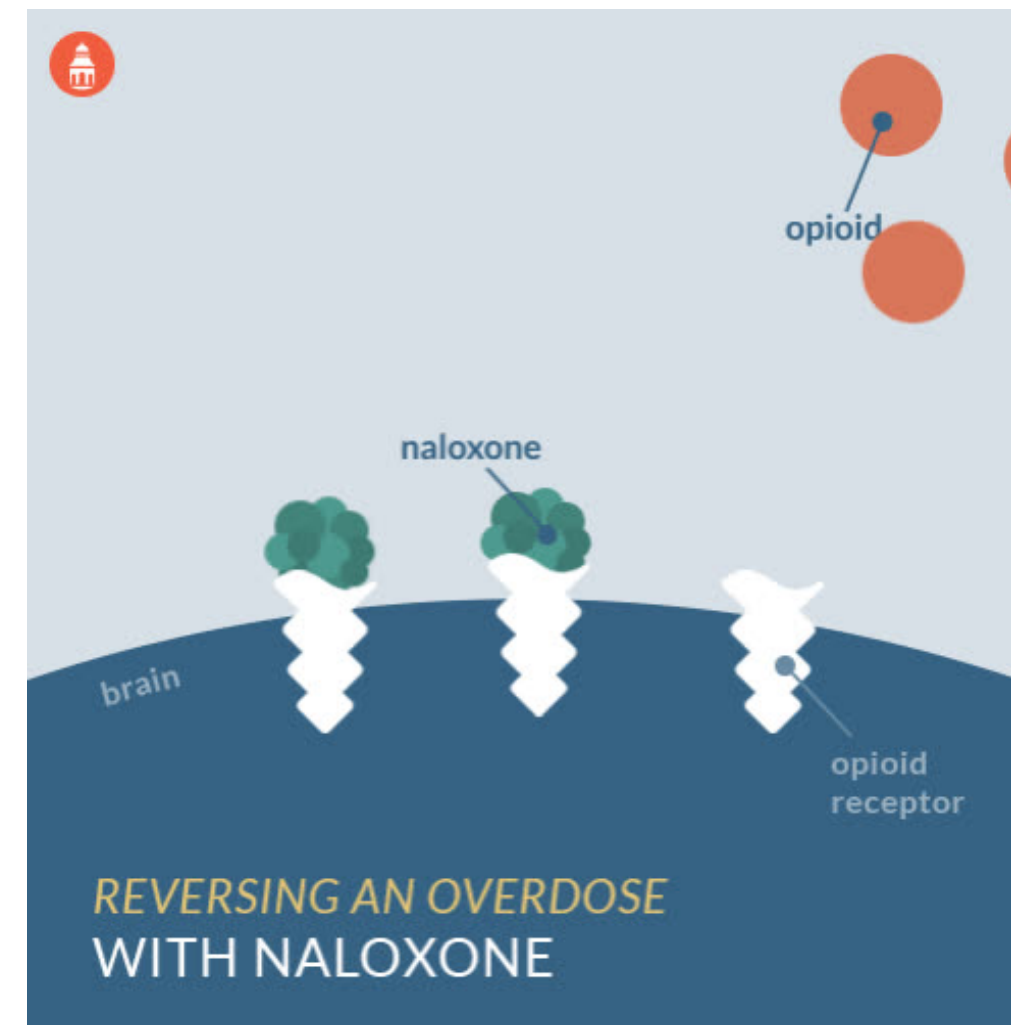




Just kidding!

Strategies for Staying Safer

- Avoiding judgment, sharing evidence-based information and creating easy access to treatment
- Stigma can prevent people from disclosing kratom or 7-OH use or seeking help → use destigmatizing language and avoid judgment
- Overdose risk increases significantly when Kratom/7-OH is combined with alcohol, opioids, benzodiazepines, or other depressants
- Always have naloxone/Narcan on hand



Supporting Individuals Who Use Kratom/7-OH

- Recognize why people are using: pain, mental health needs, withdrawal management (self treatment), energy/work demands, social, barriers to treatment
- Provide access to alternatives:
 - Evidence-based treatment for pain and kratom/opioid use disorder (i.e. MAT)
 - Integrated behavioral health care
 - Sharing ways to stay safer and science-based education
 - Reducing barriers to treatment
- Listen and treat people with dignity whether they use or not



Kratom & 7-OH Resources

- CDPH Emerging Issue Brief on Kratom & 7-OH
- [CDPH Letter to Licensed Tobacco Retailers on Kratom & 7-OH](#)
- [DEA Release on Plans to Schedule 7-OH](#)
- [CDPH Kratom Health Advisory](#)
- [NY Department of Health Fact Sheet](#)





Questions?

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