

Emerging Issue Brief

Kratom/7-hydroxymitragynine (7-OH)

Key Messages

- CDPH urges the public to avoid consuming kratom and 7-OH products, as they have been linked to severe health risks in California, including addiction, withdrawal, overdose, and death, and have not been tested for safety, consistency, or accurate labeling.
- Consuming these products along with alcohol or other drugs increases health risks.
- **These products are illegal to manufacture or sell for consumption.**
- They are not legally approved by the [FDA](#) for use in foods, drugs, or dietary supplements.

What is Kratom and what is 7-OH?

- **Kratom** is the common name for the leaf of a tropical tree, *Mitragyna speciosa*, whose leaves have been traditionally used by people in Southeast Asia for energy, sleep, and pain relief.
- Products are sold as beverages, powders, capsules, gummies, “energy shots” or labeled as “plant alkaloids” or “dietary supplements.”
- Kratom is an opioid receptor agonist, meaning it may cause opioid-like effects, however it is not known what, if any, dose or concentration may be safe or effective for the treatment of pain, anxiety, or sleep disorders, or management of opioid dependence or opioid withdrawal symptoms.
- **7-hydroxymitragynine**, commonly known as 7-OH, is derived from kratom.
- Synthetically concentrated 7-OH is highly potent compared to whole-leaf kratom and may be up to 98% 7-OH, resulting in high opioid-like effects.
- 7-OH is added to products often sold in gas stations, smoke shops and other retail and online venues, but these products are not regulated or approved by the FDA.
- 7-OH consumption may produce both stimulant effects (in low doses) and sedative effects (in high doses), and can lead to psychotic symptoms, and psychological and physiological dependence, according to the [US Drug Enforcement Administration \(PDF\)](#).
- Kratom and 7-OH are both considered “drugs of concern” by the US Drug Enforcement Administration.

Is Kratom or 7-OH addictive?

- **Both whole-leaf kratom products and 7-OH have a high potential for addiction, particularly among people with substance use disorders.**
- Harmful side effects of kratom and 7-OH can include withdrawal symptoms, insomnia, anxiety, seizures, and potentially dangerously slow breathing.
- **Kratom and 7-OH products have been linked to severe health risks including addiction, withdrawal, overdose, and death.**

Is Kratom or 7-OH “legal”?

- By State and Federal law, it is illegal to sell or manufacture kratom or 7-OH for consumption.

- Under the Sherman Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (aka Sherman Law), CDPH has authority specific to adulterated or misbranded food, drugs, medical devices and cosmetics. Food and dietary supplements containing kratom and/or 7-OH are misbranded, and adulterated pursuant to federal and state law, making them illegal to manufacture or sell for consumption.
- According to the [U.S. Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#), “there are no prescription or over-the-counter drug products containing kratom or it’s known alkaloids that are legally on the market in the U.S.” The FDA has warned consumers not to use kratom “because of the risk of serious adverse events, including liver toxicity, seizures, and substance use disorder (SUD).”

Are Kratom or 7-OH scheduled under the Federal Controlled Substances Act?

- Kratom and 7-OH are currently not scheduled drugs under the United States Controlled Substances Act
- Many individual states outside of California have scheduled one or both of these as Schedule I drugs, classifying them as having high potential for abuse, no currently accepted medical use, and no accepted safe use under medical supervision, and prohibiting possession and use.
- Under federal law, it is illegal to manufacture or sell for consumption.
- In contradiction with federal law, [some states](#) have enacted a version of a “Kratom Consumer Protection Act” to allow manufacture and sale of some kratom products while limiting access to adults.

Situation in California

CDPH is working with the California Department of [Alcoholic Beverage Control \(ABC\)](#), California Department of Tax and Fee Administration, and local health departments and law enforcement to address kratom and 7-OH manufacturing and sale in California.

Some cities and counties in California have adopted bans or restrictions on the sale of 7-OH and kratom-derived products in their jurisdictions. Questions about enforcement activities of local authorities should be directed to those cities and counties. CDPH and other state agencies continue to take action to remove food and dietary supplements adulterated with unapproved food additives, such as kratom and 7-OH products, from manufacturing and retail environments. Both state and local jurisdictions have important roles in substance use prevention and response.

- **Emerging overdose risk:** Los Angeles County has reported [seven kratom-involved overdose deaths](#) linked to the ingestion of 7-OH products among individuals ages 18 to 40 since January 2025. In most of these cases, alcohol or other substance use was also listed as a factor. [Santa Barbara County](#) reported two kratom-involved deaths in 2025 and [Yolo County](#) reported seven kratom-involved deaths since 2017.
- **Preliminary 2025 California death certificate data** show eight drug-related overdose deaths involving 7-OH, along with other drugs. Data from 2023 and 2024 death certificates indicates that 7-OH was involved in one death in 2023 and two deaths in 2024. These data are likely an underestimate as California’s post-mortem toxicology testing for 7-OH is limited.
- **Local restrictions:** Several California jurisdictions have adopted ordinances to more explicitly ban or restrict the sale or possession of kratom or 7-OH products. [Los Angeles](#), [San Diego \(PDF\)](#),

[Oceanside](#), [Newport Beach](#), [Napa](#), [Orange](#), [Riverside](#), [San Mateo](#) and [Fresno](#) have taken various actions in their cities and/or counties to-date. Local ordinances that seek to restrict components of the sale of kratom or 7-OH (such as prohibiting sale to minors or prohibiting the sale of products with >2% concentration of 7-OH) risk causing confusion about the legality of these products. By State and Federal law, none of these products are legal to sell or manufacture for consumption. Placing parameters to explicitly prohibit some aspects of kratom or 7-OH products leaves the impression its sale is actually permissible as long as it doesn't fall under the parameters explicitly called out in the ordinance. In other words, explicitly banning the sale to minors may leave the public to think it's legal to sell to adults. The local ordinances in San Diego, Newport Beach, and Oceanside make more explicit that kratom and 7-OH are illegal to sell for consumption and are thus consistent with State and Federal law.

Guidance and Advisories in California

The following resources have been developed to raise awareness of the health risks and to notify manufacturers and retailers that it is illegal to make/sell these products for consumption:

- **Advisory to ABC licensees:** Informs retailers that kratom and 7-OH products are illegal to sell for consumption and to inform retailers that ABC may take enforcement actions.
- **Kratom Fact Sheet for Local Environmental Health Agencies:** Provides information to local environmental health agencies which may take voluntary action or provide educational materials on kratom and 7-OH in their jurisdictions.
- **Prohibition on the Sale of Kratom and 7-OH Products to Tobacco Retailers:** Informs tobacco retailers that kratom and 7-OH products are illegal to sell for consumption and that retailers may be subject to legal actions and enforcement measures.
- **CDPH Health Advisory:** Information about kratom and 7-OH for health providers.

Clinical Overview

Kratom and 7-OH can produce opioid-like effects and carry similar health risks, including the potential for addiction, withdrawal, overdose and/or death.

Kratom does not show up on a drug test when that test follows the standard 5-, 10-, or 12-panel format used across the United States.

Immediate and Short-Term Effects

Kratom or 7-OH's effects typically begin within 5-15 minutes of consumption and may last for 2-5 hours, with effects varying based on dosage and the individual:

- **Low Dose (Stimulant Effects):** Stimulant effects, increased alertness, physical energy, talkativeness and sociability.
- **High Dose (Sedative/Opioid Effects):** Sedation, euphoria, reduced pain and a "calm" or "numb" feeling.
- **Possible Side Effects:** Nausea, vomiting, constipation, dizziness, sweating, dry mouth, itching and increased urination.

Long-Term and Chronic Physical Effects

Regular, long-term use of kratom or 7-OH can result in serious health issues, including:

- **Liver Toxicity:** Risk of liver damage or failure.
- **Heart Problems:** Tachycardia (fast heartbeat) and increased heart rate.
- **Physical Dependence or Addiction:** The body may require the substance to function normally.
- **Neurological Issues:** Seizures, tremors, psychosis, hallucinations and confusion.
- **Physical Changes:** Weight loss, anorexia, hair loss and dark facial pigmentation.

How to Respond to Suspected Kratom or 7-OH Overdoses

Recommendations for the public

- Carry naloxone and know how to respond to an overdose. Naloxone may work to reverse an overdose from kratom or 7-OH.
- Call 911 immediately if someone becomes unresponsive.
- It is important to administer rescue breaths, place an individual in the rescue position and monitor the individual after administration of naloxone.
- Breathing is more critical to monitor than consciousness.
- The safest choice is to avoid consuming kratom and 7-OH products.
- If you do consume these products:
 - Avoid using kratom or 7-OH along with alcohol, opioids or other drugs.
 - Avoid using kratom or 7-OH by yourself.
- Always carry naloxone.
- Make naloxone available in your community.

To report the unlawful sale of kratom, consumers can call the **CDPH Complaint Hotline at (800) 495-3232**.

Is kratom or 7-OH safe to use instead of opioids?

Kratom and 7-OH products have been linked to severe health risks including addiction, withdrawal, overdose, and death. These products have not been tested for safety, consistency, effectiveness, or accurate labeling, and have not been approved for sale by the FDA for consumption. There are several well researched, medically proven treatments to support those facing addiction and other health conditions. Health care and treatment providers know the effective doses, side effects and how to prescribe these treatments for individual needs. CDPH encourages people to talk to their doctor about safe and proven therapies for those facing addiction and other health conditions.

What should you do with kratom or 7-OH products in your possession?

Consumers in possession of natural leaf kratom products should follow recommendations by the [FDA regarding the disposal of contaminated or spoiled food](#). Most commonly this is accomplished by disposing of contaminated food products in the garbage.

The FDA published [guidelines](#) regarding the destruction of 7-OH products which are handled as opioid drugs. Generally, this involves the collection of these types of products at drug take-back events/facilities followed by transport to a permitted hazardous waste combustor (incinerator).

Additional Resources

Fact Sheets

- [FDA and Kratom](#)
- [National Institute on Drug Abuse – Kratom](#)
- [Increases in Kratom-Related Reports to Poison Centers — National Poison Data System, United States, 2015–2025 | MMWR](#)
- [NY State Department of Health – Kratom: What Clinicians Need to Know](#)

CDPH News Releases

- [CDPH Files Legal Action Against Kratom Manufacturer](#) (May 1, 2026)
- [CDPH Warns Retailers and Public About the Dangers of Kratom-derived Products and 7-OH](#) (Jan. 16, 2026)
- [Foods, Dietary Supplements and Medical Drugs containing Kratom and 7-OH are Dangerous and Illegal to Sell or Manufacture](#) (Oct. 24, 2025)

News and Reports in California

- [Newsom launches major crackdown on pain killer](#) (SF Gate)
- [Governor Newsom announces 95% compliance with prohibition of illegal kratom products](#)
- [County residents warned to avoid consuming products containing Kratom](#) (Santa Maria Times)
- [Cracking Down on Kratom](#) (Capital Public Radio's Insight with Vicki Gonzalez, featuring CDPH's Dr. Rita Nguyen)
- [Health Experts warn about potentially dangerous substances Kratom and 7-OH](#) (ABC7 News – KGO)
- [County's Health & Sheriff Departments Warn Resident to Avoid Products Containing Kratom and 7-OH¹²](#) (Santa Barbara Independent)
- [More Orange County Cities Crack Down on Kratom](#) (Voice of OC)
- [California health officials push ban on sale of kratom products](#) (KRCR)