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SAFE Coalition: Edibles Effects More Gradual and Last Longer Than Smoking

Recent legislation allowing for legal marijuana use in some parts of the country has experienced an explosive growth in the marijuana product industry, particularly in Washington state and Colorado where both medical and recreational use are legalized. Youth obtain access to consume Cannabis in different methods which include; Joints or bongs (smoking), Dabbing (smoking of concentrated extract). Vaping (use of electronic vaporizer). Edibles (cooked into food and eaten). Topicals (lotions, sprays, oils, and creams). Tinctures (alcoholic solution). Characteristic symptoms of marijuana use are likely to be experienced regardless of how THC enters the bloodstream.

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), Marijuana's primary psychoactive component that alters the mind and delivers the high is Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). The mind-altering powerful effects of THC are derived from its interaction with, and activation of the cannabinoid receptor system in the brain. THC in varying concentrations is present in a multitude of marijuana-related products, including raw plant materials, infused edible formulations, and potent cannabis extractions. Cannabinoid may undergo various forms of processing prior to use, many of its underlying psychoactive effects will remain fundamentally similar from product to product.

Whether ingested by smoking, eating an edible, or another method, THC as well as any other cannabinoid substances present will make its way into the bloodstream and eventually be delivered to the brain. THC often elicits feelings of relaxation and increased sensitivity to light, sound, and touch. Of most concern, THC can also adversely affect short-term memory and coordination and can bring on anxiety and paranoia and distorted thinking. In just five years, the number of small children in the US exposed to cannabis after accidentally eating an edible rose 1,375%, per a new a study that analyzed reports to the National Poison Data System, which includes the nation's 55 regional poison control centers.

There may be significant differences in terms of THC concentration or potency, swiftness of effect onset, and longevity of these symptoms depending on the specific cannabis product used and its associated method of intake. Smoking has been one of the most common historic methods of using marijuana. After inhaling, THC enters the lungs and then passes from the lungs into the bloodstream, which quickly carries the chemical to the brain. By smoking a joint, an individual can feel the effects of THC much more rapidly than if consumed through an edible. As absorption into the bloodstream takes place on a quicker timeframe and, frequently, progresses over a shorter duration than that associated with edibles, the subjective effects of smoking marijuana are likely to be felt more immediately, may peak more quickly, and ultimately last for a shorter period of time.

Research shows that while cigarette smoking has been declining in recent years, marijuana use is increasing, and those who smoke marijuana have a much higher rate of tobacco use than those who do not use marijuana. Smoking marijuana may have certain adverse effects on respiratory health; though the underlying mechanisms and associated risks appear to differ quite significantly from those related to tobacco smoking, various studies have reported associations with airway inflammation, barotrauma, and obstructive pulmonary issues per NIDA.

In edibles, Cannabis and its extracted active ingredients are commonly mixed into various types of food, including brownies, cookies, and candy. As manufacturing methods vary, edible products can vary

greatly in their potency (or cannabinoid concentration). After eating an edible containing marijuana, THC is absorbed into the bloodstream through the digestive tract and undergoes a first metabolic pass in the liver before entering general circulation. Since this absorption process takes place more slowly than it does through the lungs (in some cases 30 to 60 minutes before reaching the brain), the effects felt after consuming edibles will often be more gradual in onset however dangerously last much longer as evidenced by the rise of youth consuming these products and the associated cases of accidental poisoning.

Some of the more pronounced differences between smoking a joint and eating an edible are reflected in the speed of onset of effects, the duration until peak effects are experienced, and the longevity of the effects. Smoking is a very rapidly effective route of administration. Joints, bong, and other methods that involve inhaled smoke or vapor can produce a near-instantaneous “high” that then may last 1 to 3 hours; edibles take longer to kick in, elicit peak effects more slowly, and the effects may be felt for many hours.

The most important factor for parents to remember is that THC is present with both methods of marijuana intake—carrying with it the same psychoactive adverse consequences regardless of the method of ingestion and a danger for all youth. Additionally, the prevalence of smoke shops and tobacco retailers located in areas where families shop daily compound the issue by exposing youth to these appealing edibles and drug paraphernalia as many have been cited for selling laced items with THC that are most tempting to youngsters, mirroring candy and packaged as such.

For help Quitting smoking or vaping or to help a loved beat a Nicotine Addiction please visit the American Lung Association on their Website at: www.americanlung.org. “The American Lung Association says the only thing that should go into your lungs is clean air, so if you’re inhaling anything, it could potentially be toxic to your lungs!!

The New York State Smokers’ Quitline assists thousands of New Yorkers every year in their attempts to break free from smoking and other tobacco and the service is free and confidential. Call 1-866-NYQUITS (1-866-697-8487) or visit them at: <https://www.nysmokefree.com/>.for Quit Help.

SAFE, Inc. is the only alcohol and substance abuse prevention, intervention, and education agency in the City of Glen Cove. It’s Coalition is concerned about all combustible and electronic products with marijuana and tobacco and is employing environmental strategies to educate and update the community regarding the negative consequences in collaboration with Carol Meschkow, Manager-Tobacco Action Coalition of Long Island. To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition or to learn more about electronic products visit the Underage Marijuana Use and Vaping Facts and Myths Pages of SAFE’s website to learn more about how its use is detrimental to your health at www.safeglencove.org.