

LOOKS CAN BE DECEIVING:

Keeping Kids Safe from Cannabis Edibles

Cannabidiol (CBD) and tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) are both naturally occurring compounds called cannabinoids found in cannabis plants. CBD is a non-psychoactive cannabinoid and does not cause the “high” that THC does. In 2018, the federal government passed the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (known as the Farm Bill) which legalized hemp production. The Farm Bill also legalized CBD that comes from hemp, defined by the Farm Bill as cannabis containing less than 0.3% delta-9 THC.

Following the passage of the Farm Bill, there was a surge in THC products, including delta-9 products with high levels of THC, sold in North Carolina, other states, and online.



The Farm Bill has not addressed the legal status of any form of THC other than delta-9.

This has caused semi-synthetic THC forms, like delta-8, delta-10, and many others, to become widely available.

Products containing these forms of THC may present safety concerns. To learn more, see the [Cannabis Regulators Association's Considerations for Federal Hemp Regulation](#).



States that have legalized THC products regulate them and often set safety limits on the amount of THC in a serving and in a package. However, both federally and in North Carolina, there is no regulation of products containing THC. This poses specific dangers because their purity, safety, and strength cannot be guaranteed.

Side effects of these products can include hallucinations, anxiety, passing out, and even death. There is currently no minimum age of sale for THC products in North Carolina. Any age limits retailers impose in North Carolina for the sale of THC products are voluntary.



Identifying intoxicating cannabis products:

Many cannabis edibles have packaging that appeals to children or copies other snacks. This means they may be easily mistaken for a commonly available product. THC products are intended for adult use and many of the serving sizes are only a tiny portion of the package.

These products pose risks when the serving size is not followed, or if children consume an amount intended for adults. Examples of products that are infused with THC include:

- Gummy candies, chocolate bars, fudge, and lollipops
- Baked goods, snack foods, and popcorn
- Desserts such as cookies, brownies, cupcakes, and ice cream
- Sweetened and/or carbonated beverages including infused water

All of these products containing THC are readily available across North Carolina. They can be found in malls, gas stations, vape shops, and health food stores/vitamin shops. These products have no age limit required for purchase.



What to do if a child ingests these products:

- Try to find out how much your child ate by asking the child and/or looking at the wrapper to see how much THC is in the product.
- Edibles take longer to take effect compared to smoking cannabis. It can take 30-90 minutes to start feeling the effects, and the peak effects can occur 2-3 hours after ingestion and last 4-12 hours. Continue to watch your child for signs of overdose which can include: acting sluggish, feeling dizzy, trouble walking or sitting up, fast heart rate, difficulty breathing, sleepiness, or anxiety/panic.
- Call the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222.
- Call 911 if a child becomes unresponsive or has difficulty breathing.



How to keep kids safe:

- Keep these products out of the home.
- If these products are in the home, store them safely and away from regular food and drinks. Store them the same way you store medication or cleaning products – in child-resistant packaging or containers, and out of reach or locked away.
- Do not consume adult edible products in front of children.
- Avoid buying products that look like candy or snacks that appeal to children.
- Talk with teens about the dangers of consuming these products, including how THC affects their developing brains, driving under the influence of impairing substances, and the risk of developing cannabis use disorder.
- Talk to family members, friends, and caregivers about these risks and share safety tips.



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