

**M**ost people do not think about the active ingredients in marijuana and marijuana products before they use them.

Users have a specific goal in mind — to get high, to relieve pain, and sometimes both. They only care about buying a product that helps them achieve their goal. But there are a few things to know about THC that some have not heard before.

## THC and THC

If you ask most marijuana users, they may know that THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) is the active ingredient that makes them high. What they probably do not know is there are four types of THC found in the leaves and flowers of the marijuana plant. One of those types is called Delta-8 THC, and it is causing quite a bit of controversy in the cannabis world.

## Here's What You Should Know

Some drug users seek out Delta-8 THC wherever it might be sold because, unlike the other forms of THC in marijuana (like Delta-9—the more common form), it is not regulated by the government.

*The military however has prohibited the use of any form of cannabis or related substance or substitutes. Severe disciplinary penalties may be imposed for their use.*

Those who distribute Delta-8 can grow and sell it faster, boosting profits. Producers tout Delta-8 as a “weed-lite,” pushing the narrative that it creates the same kind of euphoria and pain relief without the extreme side effects caused by other forms of THC.

## No Approval from the FDA

As with marijuana (Delta-9 THC), the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved the use of Delta-8 for medicinal purposes, and neither has the American Medical Association nor its expert division the American Society on Addiction Medicine. Instead, the FDA has warned consumers of the risks of using it.

Your employer may prohibit use of Delta-8 because it is THC and a drug test will detect it as such, and this in turn will lead to mandatory administrative actions under federal law, especially if you have a safety-sensitive position.

## Nothing New about Delta-8

Delta-8 THC is not new. It was discovered in the early 20th century.

The full potential of Delta-8 THC has only recently come to the forefront however, making it popular with producers and sellers who find it lucrative since they can sidestep the regulatory process when selling it.

When Delta-8 THC was discovered, it had to be extracted from marijuana plants by hand, which was a time-consuming process. The quantities they could remove also were small.

Producers did not want to waste their time — and money — trying to retrieve it from the plants.

Today, drug chemists can add either type of THC to CBD oil. CBD oil is legal, but with more than .3% THC by volume, it is illegal. Still, it is unregulated.

## See the Hazards of Delta-8 THC?

Delta-8 THC comes with serious health risks to users. Producers claim it is safe to use since it has fewer side effects than other forms of THC. Consumers can buy it in concentrates, edibles, and liquid for vaping.

Delta-8 THC products have not been evaluated or approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

# What You Should Know about Delta-8 THC



While aware of Delta-8's growing popularity, the FDA has serious concerns about whether Delta-8's benefits outweigh the risks of its use.

Of particular concern is the increased marketing of Delta-8 THC products as safe and effective for medical and therapeutic uses. The FDA refutes this entirely and warns consumers to avoid Delta-8.

The FDA says Delta-8 THC can cause serious health problems. Between December 2020 and July 2021, the FDA reported dangerous reactions in 22 consumers who used Delta-8-infused THC products. Of those, 14 required emergency room or hospital intervention for side effects like hallucinations, passing out, and vomiting.

## Seeking Help for Marijuana Dependence

You may be at increased risk for psychoactive drug dependency if your family has a history of alcohol addiction, alcohol use disorder, or you've heard stories of alcohol problems in your family's history. Your company EAP can help assess any concern.

Signs of dependency include

- Tolerance to marijuana, needing to use more to get the same effect.
- Increasing or maintaining use despite promises to cut back or quit.
- Any recognition that using cannabis may be interfering with other activities, tasks, goals, or one's job.
- Others being affected or complaining about one's use of substances.
- Development of withdrawal symptoms like anxiety, irritability, tremors when stopping or reducing use.