**Delta-8: What is it? What are the health concerns?**

What is delta 8?
‘Delta 8’ is a short name for delta-8 tetrahydrocannabinol, or delta-8 THC. It is one of many cannabinoids, or chemical compounds found naturally in *cannabis sativa* plants, of which “marijuana” and “hemp” are two varieties. You may be more familiar with another cannabinoid: delta-9 THC, the main psychoactive ingredient in marijuana.

Does delta-8 THC also have psychoactive properties?
Yes. However the amount of delta-8 THC found naturally in cannabis plants is very small; not enough to cause any noticeable effects. The only way to experience any effects from delta-8 THC is to extract it from the plant and concentrate it. This is a difficult and expensive process involving several harsh chemicals.

Today, numerous products infused with delta-8 THC can be purchased in stores and online, including edibles, vape cartridges, and tinctures.

What is hemp?
Hemp is a cannabis plant, but it only contains 0.3% or less of delta-9 THC by continued page 3

**Hazards in Arts and Crafts**

Did you take up painting, sewing, furniture refinishing, or other craft in 2020? You aren’t alone. Amidst the anxiety and isolation of the Covid-19 pandemic, people sought arts and crafts materials in record numbers to keep themselves—and their children—occupied. Google searches featuring the phrase “How to make...” *doubled in March 2020* alone. Many arts and crafts hobbies involve chemical products. More products in the home continued page 2

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**POISON TRIVIA**

What substance is used in a trendy new ritual promising to "purify the body of toxins & the spirit of negative energy?"

Answer on page 3
means more chances to have exposures to them in harmful ways or harmful amounts. Since the start of 2020, the Blue Ridge Poison Center has received over 650 calls about arts and crafts materials, including paints, glues, inks, dyes, modeling clays, and more. Most cases resulted in minor, if any, health effects. Some, however, were more serious and required medical attention. For example:

- A 3-year old child drank the ink from a broken gel pen, and then began vomiting.
- A woman was complaining of painful, difficult breathing after using spray paint in a poorly-ventilated room.
- A teen got model glue in his eye. He was experiencing redness, pain, and blurry vision, even after rinsing his eye for several minutes.

Who is at risk?
Preschool and elementary grade children may be tempted to taste or handle products that are brightly colored, smell good, or are being stored in dishes normally used for food and drink. Adolescents may be at risk because some paints, glues, and solvents are popular substances of inhalant abuse. Adults may be at risk for exposure when they do not follow safety instructions on the label. Other risk factors for harm from include having visual problems, physical disabilities, cognitive disabilities, or asthma.

Protecting Children and Adults: The LHAMA Act
In 1988 Congress passed the Labeling of Hazardous Art Materials Act (LHAMA), which required manufacturers to have all products evaluated by a toxicologist to determine any potential harmful health effects. Products have to be evaluated for harm from both acute (one-time) exposure and chronic (repeated, long term) exposure.

According to LHAMA, if a product presents any health hazards, it may not be used by children in grade 6 or below. How will parents, teachers, and caretakers know if a product has these hazards? It should be on the label. By law, the manufacturer MUST:
- List all hazardous ingredients.
- State all health risks.
- Provide instructions for safe use; including clean up, storage, and disposal.
- State “not suitable for children in grade 6 and below” on the label.

All labels must verify their adherence to the law with the words “Conforms to ASTM [American Society for Testing and Materials] D4236” or similar statement. This phrase must be on the label even if the product does not pose any health hazards. One of the following seals usually accompanies the statement: the AP ‘Approved Product’ seal for non-toxic products, or the CL ‘Cautionary’ seal for those with potential health hazards.

There are some limitations to the 1988 LHAMA Act. Products do not have to comply with the labeling requirements if they are not intended for sale to schools or for use by children. Examples include industrial or commercial products like house paint, certain ceramics materials, or silk screen printing inks. Furthermore, even relatively non-toxic items could pose danger under certain conditions. Such factors include:

- **Product ingredients**—Example: one swallow of most oil-based artist paint may not cause any health effects, but certain colors (like white) may contain a dangerous amount of lead, a toxic metal.
- **Amount or concentration**—Example: inhaling the scent of an ink marker while using it in a well ventilated room usually causes no problems.
dry weight. Hemp also contains very small amounts of delta-8 THC. Because these levels are so low, hemp does not have any psychoactive properties. In other words, smoking, vaping, or eating hemp cannot cause a ‘high.’

In 2018 it became legal to grow hemp when Congress passed the U.S. Farm Bill. Today, people farm hemp to make products like rope, clothing, animal feed, and more. Hemp is also a source of cannabidiol (CBD).

So...Delta-8 THC is legal?
Yes—for now. Deregulating hemp created a legal loophole. Marijuana and delta-9 THC are considered illicit substances by the federal government and many states. (Even in states where marijuana has been legalized, it is still highly regulated.) But delta-8 THC is extracted from hemp—not marijuana. Also, its chemical structure is slightly different from delta-9 THC. These small distinctions make a big difference in the eyes of the law. Currently, delta-8 THC is not considered an illicit substance and not subject to regulation. Some lawmakers are working to change that.

Why are health officials concerned about delta-8?
The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has received numerous reports about people experiencing adverse health effects from using products that contain delta-8 THC. Likewise, poison control centers across the country, including the Blue Ridge Poison Center, are seeing an increase in calls about problems with delta-8 THC.

What adverse health effects are associated with delta-8 THC?
- Nausea and vomiting
- Difficulty moving and speaking
- Hallucinations
- Anxiety and increased heart rate
- Loss of consciousness

Why is delta-8 THC making so many people sick?
There are two concerns:

First: Delta-8 THC products have not been evaluated, tested, or approved by the FDA to be safe or effective. We don’t really understand a lot about delta 8 THC and how it might affect the brain in the long run. People are consuming delta-8 THC in amounts much higher than found in nature. Other untested cannabinoids such as delta-10 THC are popping up in products now, too.

Second: This is a completely unregulated industry. With no rules or oversight, delta-8 THC products are often manufactured in uncontrolled or unsanitary settings. When tested in a lab, many delta-8 products are revealed to be contaminated with solvents, acids, heavy metals, mold, and other harmful chemicals.

As with any illicit substance, consumers have no idea what they are really putting into their body or how it might affect them.

Who can help?
For more information about delta-8 THC, see 5 things to know about delta-8 tetrahydrocannabinol – delta-8 THC, from U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Anyone experiencing negative effects after consuming delta-8 THC should call the Blue Ridge Poison Center: 1-800-222-1222. Our experts have the most up-to-date knowledge about treating adverse health effects from delta-8 THC and other cannabis products. The call is free and confidential.

Practice: Also, populations are declining as more people are trapping them for their venom. Note that the health claims are not scientifically proven and there has been at least one death from this practice. Also populations are declining as more people are trapping them for their venom.
However, concentrating the fume in a plastic bag and inhaling it with the intent of getting ‘high’ could be deadly.

♦ **Frequency and duration of exposure**— Example: a single accidental taste of a brush cleaning solvent may not cause injury. But a habit of using your mouth to form your paintbrush bristles into a point every time you dip the brush into the cleaning solution may cause health effects over time.

♦ **Route of exposure**—many products may be safe to spill onto your skin, but dangerous to swallow or breathe (or vice versa).

Products manufactured in countries with less strict laws may not be properly tested or labeled. For example: certain brands of sidewalk chalk and crayons, both made in China, were once found to contain harmful amounts of lead. (These products have since been recalled from U.S. stores).

The first step in preventing harmful exposure to arts and crafts materials is to avoid a case of mistaken identity. Placing something like paint or turpentine in an unmarked food or beverage container, such as a soda bottle, could lead to someone accidentally swallowing it.

**Tips to protect children from exposure to arts and crafts materials include:**

✔ Check the label. Young children should only use materials labeled ‘non-toxic’ per LHAMA guidelines.

✔ When not in use, store arts and crafts materials up high—out of the sight and reach of children.

✔ Limit potential exposure by offering the smallest amount necessary. Example: pour paints or glue into smaller single-use containers for children.

**Safety tips for adults and teens:**

✔ Don’t eat, drink, smoke, or apply make-up near art materials.

✔ Wash hands after handling materials.

✔ Read labels, and follow all safety guidelines.