MCFARLAND RADAR (Relevant Alcohol & Drug Awareness Resources) Coalition

AODA Prevention Special Edition Newsletter

February 2024

February Marijuana Awareness Month

Delta 8

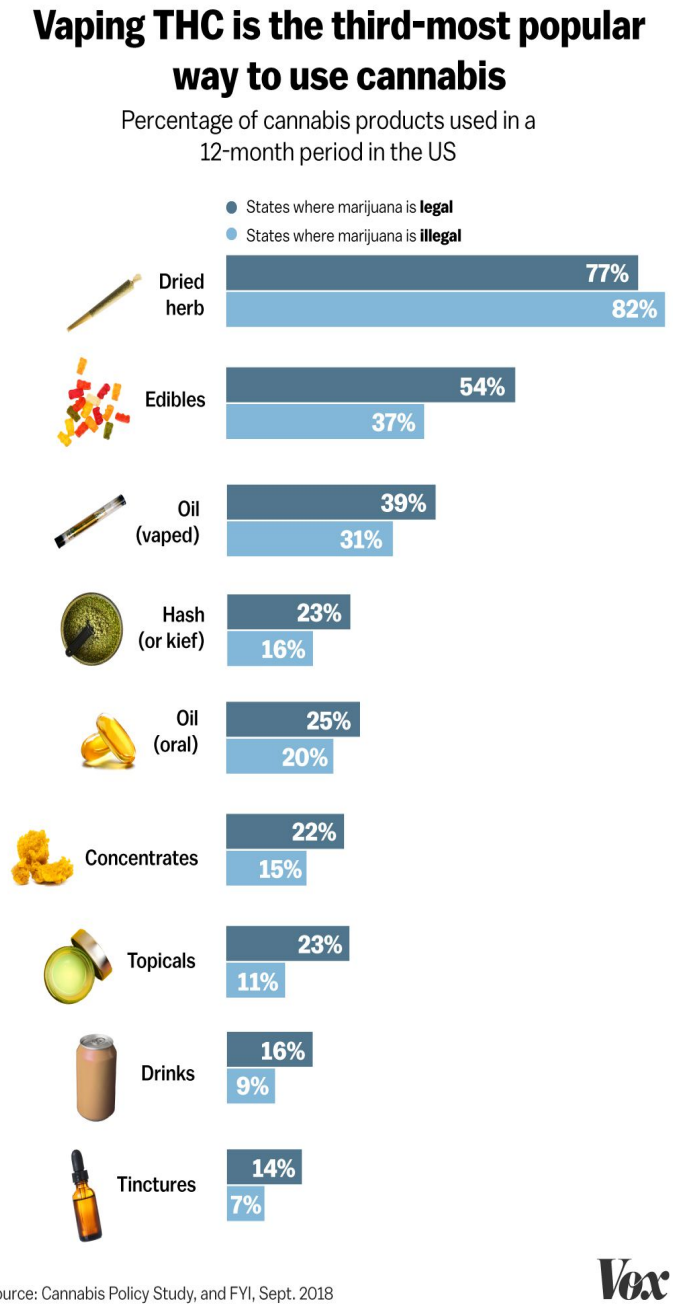
Delta 8 tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) is a psychoactive substance found in the *Cannabis sativa* plant and while it does occur naturally in small quantities in the plant. Most of the commercially available delta-8 has been synthesized through a conversion process that uses a variety of chemicals to convert hemp-derived CBD into delta-8.

Here are things to know about Delta 8 THC:

- Delta-8 THC products have not been evaluated or approved by the FDA for safe use and may be marketed in ways that put the public health at risk. Some of these products may be labeled simply as “hemp products,” which may mislead consumers who associate “hemp” with “non-psychoactive.” Furthermore, the FDA is concerned by the proliferation of products that contain delta-8 THC and are marketed for therapeutic or medical uses, although they have not been approved.
- The FDA has received adverse event reports involving Delta-8 THC-containing products. The FDA received 104 reports of adverse events in patients who consumed Delta-8 THC products between December 1, 2020, and February 28, 2022. The highest report was adverse events after ingestion of Delta-8 containing food products (ex. Brownies and gummies). Adverse events included, but were not limited to: hallucinations, vomiting, tremor, anxiety, dizziness, confusion, and loss of consciousness.
- Delta-8 THC products should be kept out of the reach of children and pets. Manufacturers are packaging and labeling these products in ways that may appeal to children (gummies, chocolates, cookies, candies, etc.). These products may be purchased online, as well as at a variety of retailers, including convenience stores and gas stations, where there may not be age limits on who can purchase these products.
- Delta-8 THC products often involve use of potentially harmful chemicals to create the concentrations of Delta-8 THC claimed in the marketplace. Manufacturing of Delta-8 THC products may occur in uncontrolled or unsanitary settings, which may lead to the presence of unsafe contaminants or other potentially harmful substances.

Vaping THC

Just like nicotine vaping devices, marijuana vapes work by heating a liquid or oil that becomes a vapor the user inhales. These marijuana concentrates contain extraordinarily high THC levels that could range from 40 to 80 percent. This form of marijuana can be up to four times higher in THC content than high grade or top shelf marijuana, which normally measures around 25 percent THC levels.



Risks of THC Oil

Research suggests that vaping THC oil, especially oil that contain vitamin E acetate, can be particularly harmful to the lungs. Vitamin E acetate, which is regularly added to THC when preparing it for use in e-cigarettes and vaping devices, is especially harmful when it's inhaled. Vitamin E acetate can produce a serious inflammatory condition that damages the lungs called EVAIL, which stands for e-cigarette or vaping use-associated lung injury.

Symptoms of EVAIL: Chest pain, Cough, Shortness of breath, Accelerated heartbeat, Abdominal pain, Nausea and vomiting, Diarrhea, Fever, Chills, Unexplained weight loss and in some cases, EVALI may cause death.

Side Effects of Vaping THC:

- Addiction: Contrary to popular belief, marijuana can be addictive. About 30% of users are estimated to have substance use disorder.
- Impaired brain function: Marijuana use has an immediate effect on thinking, attention, memory, coordination, and perceptions of time.
- Cancer risk: Vaping or smoking marijuana may contribute to the development of lung cancer.
- Heart health: Marijuana raises the heart rate and blood pressure, so it could increase your risk of stroke and heart disease.
- Mental health: Frequent, high-dose use may cause anxiety, paranoia, temporary psychosis (disconnection from reality), schizophrenia, depression, and suicidal thoughts or behaviors.

K2 (Spice)

K2 and Spice are just two of the many brand names for synthetic designer drugs that are intended to mimic THC. These designer synthetic drugs are from the synthetic cannabinoid class of drugs that are often marketed and sold under the guise of “herbal incense” or “potpourri”, at small convenience stores, head shops, gas stations, and via the Internet from both domestic and international sources.

The chemical compounds typically used in K2/ Spice are generally found in bulk powder form, and then dissolved in solvents, such as acetone, before being applied to dry plant material to make the “herbal incense” products. After local distributors apply the drug to the dry plant material, they package it for retail distribution, again without pharmaceutical-grade chemical purity standards, as these have no accepted medical use, and ignoring any control mechanisms to prevent contamination or to ensure a consistent, uniform concentration of the powerful and dangerous drug in each package.

Spraying or mixing the synthetic cannabinoids on plant material provides a vehicle for the most common route of administration - smoking (using a pipe, a water pipe, or rolling the drug-laced plant material in cigarette papers). In addition to the cannabinoids laced on plant material and sold as potpourri and incense, liquid cannabinoids have been designed to be vaporized through both disposable and reusable electronic cigarettes.

Effects of K2/Spice

The side effects of K2/Spice vary by the specific chemical compounds present in the drug (which are unregulated, and frequently changing) and may include:

- Vomiting.
- Hallucinations.
- Paranoia.
- Severe anxiety.
- Panic attacks.
- Aggression.

The long-term effects of Spice use are largely unknown due to the drug’s status as a relatively new drug on the market. However, heart damage from myocardial ischemia and renal damage are severe effects that have been reported. Both, obviously, are ominous signs of the potential long-term consequences of abusing this drug.

McFarland is a small community south of Madison in Dane County. In January of 2017, a group of concerned citizens came together to discuss substance abuse problems in the McFarland area. The McFarland RADAR is a result of these meetings

We are comprised of local representatives from schools, businesses, churches, village administration as well as parents, and youth—all working together to promote healthy lifestyles

For more information go to: https://www.radarmc.com/

The McFarland RADAR (RADAR stands for Relevant Alcohol & Drug Awareness Resources) Coalition works to develop, implement and support environmental strategies to reduce substance abuse.

We believe by working together, we can nurture social and environmental changes to make the McFarland area a safer and healthier place, brightening the future of our children, youth and families.

For time, day and place of meetings, please contact Cathy Kalina at CathyK@fsmad.org

McFarland RADAR Mission Statement

"The mission of McFarland's RADAR Coalition is to promote healthy lifestyles in the McFarland area through alcohol and drug abuse prevention and education efforts."

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

We are asking you to give the gift of time. Make a difference in the lives of our youth and our community by

1. Working with us in providing support for planning, project management and awareness campaigns
2. Helping with coalition events, conferences, workshops, and fairs held throughout the year.
3. Being a voice for change in our community, it is time to come together and be that force for change in the McFarland area.