



Unregulated Hemp-Derived Psychoactive Compounds

A growing market of THC products derived from the hemp plant has exploded across the United States. These include substances like Delta-8 THC, Delta-10 THC, THC-O and HHC which mimic the intoxicating effects of marijuana products. These products are so new that state and federal governments are just beginning to respond. An FDA Warning from May 4, 2022 states delta-8 THC products have not been evaluated or approved by the FDA for safe use in any context.

Marijuana plants contain many different natural chemical compounds called cannabinoids. Cannabinoids affect the brain, body, and central nervous system. **Delta-9** THC is one of the most prevalent, and well known as the psychoactive compound that causes the intoxicating effects in marijuana.

The 2018 Farm Bill, included an amendment to the Controlled Substances Act to exclude the hemp plant from the definition of marijuana, provided it contains no more than a 0.3% concentration of delta-9 THC.

CBD is a chemical found in marijuana and hemp but does not have a psychoactive effect. Some CBD products are sold in combination with delta-8, delta-10, HHC, and THC-O, the effects of which have not been researched or regulated.

Delta-8 THC is one of many cannabinoids found naturally in the cannabis plant. The natural amount in hemp is very low, however, the psychoactive compound affects the brain similarly. Delta-8 can be extracted from legal hemp through a chemical process or synthetically created in a lab from CBD.

Delta-10 THC doesn't activate the brain like delta-8 THC but still causes a psychoactive effect that may include mood changes. The production process is similar to that of delta-8.

THC-O is a non-natural cannabinoid. Production begins by extracting delta-8 THC from hemp, then it is combined with other chemicals to synthesize THC-O. THC-O is potentially more intoxicating than delta-8, delta-10, HHC, and even delta 9. Similar to other synthetic cannabinoids like Spice and K2, effects and side effects can be severe.

HHC (Hexahydrocannabinol) is a cannabinoid found in small amounts in the hemp plant. CBD can also be synthesized into HHC through a chemical process. Although HHC isn't technically a THC, it produces similar intoxicating effects and side effects such as insomnia, anxiety and paranoia.

These THC products are sold in different forms including vaping products, beverages and edibles including cookies and candy. Items can be purchased for an average of \$20-\$50 in the same places and under the same laws that allow CBD products to be sold. They are easily available online, as well as at convenience stores, gas stations and head shops, where there may not be age limits or enforcement depending on state and local laws.