



Edibles: Alert for parents & carers, March 2021

There is concern locally about the use of edibles by young people which has resulted in some requiring medical assistance. We are writing to share information with you about edible and how to support children and young people who may have access to them.

What are edibles?

Edibles are food products that contain cannabis. There are many forms of edibles, including sweets. They usually contain Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and Cannabidiol (CBD).



THC is the psychoactive compound in Cannabis and will make people feel 'high' while CBD is the non- psychoactive chemical compound which does not have the same effect. Any CBD product containing over 0.2% of THC is illegal in the UK.

The sweet versions are widely available on the internet and via social media and may be easily accessed by young people.

What are we worried about?

The amount of cannabis in these products can vary greatly and sometimes other harmful drugs are added too. The effects of consuming edibles are unpredictable and it can be very easy to accidentally take a larger dose. Edibles take between 1-3 hours to have an effect because food is absorbed into the bloodstream through the liver. Because it takes longer, the person taking them may end up consuming larger amounts of the drug while thinking the drug isn't working. Because edibles may look like other products, there is also the risk someone may ingest them without realising they contain drugs, this could include other children in the home.

An overdose from edibles can involve: Paranoia, nausea, hallucinations, panic attacks, impaired mobility.

Regular cannabis use can have adverse impacts on: brain development, heart health, memory and cognition, psychiatric health.

Long-term cannabis use may be especially worrisome in adolescents, where it may increase the risk of schizophrenia as well as impacting learning and memory.

What can you do?

We recommend monitoring food packaging/ wrappers looking for wording such as CBD or THC suggesting the items are cannabis oil infused.

Please be mindful of the medical needs should a child present with symptoms (which may include paranoia, nausea, hallucinations, panic attacks, impaired mobility), or if it becomes apparent they have consumed a drug laced substance. In a medical emergency call 999.

If you are concerned about a child in Kingston & Richmond for any reason, you can contact the Single Point of Access (SPA) for advice, support and information from 8am-6pm Monday to Friday on 020 8547 5008, or out of hours on 020 8770 5000. The SPA will be able to help assess the support the child needs and ensure they are referred to an appropriate service as necessary.

Where can I find further information?

The following websites are really helpful sources of information for children, young people, and their parents and carers:

<https://www.talktofrank.com/>

and their specific page on cannabis, <https://www.talktofrank.com/drug/cannabis>

FRANK has honest information about drugs. For friendly, confidential advice, Talk to FRANK on 0300 1236600.

<https://www.gettingiton.org.uk/>

Getting it on is a website aimed at 13-19 year olds living in South West London, to assist them in accessing advice, information and services across a range of issues including drugs and alcohol.

Acknowledgements

This alert accessed the following webpages to support collation of the above information:

<https://www.edasuk.org/news/cannabis-edibles-what-are-they-warnings-and-risks/>

<https://www.cavendish-school.org/edible-drugs-nd218>