

# Cannabis Edibles

Information for education professionals - MARCH 2022



## Summary:

In recent months there have been an increasing number of stories in the national media relating to Cannabis Edibles, and adverse reactions within young people, including some which have occurred whilst on school grounds.

Locally we have been approached by a number of schools and professionals who are increasingly concerned by this national trend, and in some instances they too have found students in possession of edibles, or have themselves had to deal with students under the influence.

## What are 'Edibles?'

A Cannabis edible is simply a food item which has been infused with Cannabis (specifically THC), the presence of THC means that these food items, just like regular Herbal Cannabis are Class-B controlled drugs, and so are illegal to possess or supply.

## What do they look like?

Many different food items can be infused with Cannabis, traditionally these have taken the form of cakes/brownies, but recently they have most commonly had the appearance of sweets, such as gummies. Often these edibles will be in packaging which mimics legitimate sweets (such as the examples on the following page) and so at first glance may not give any cause for concern, and so they will often avoid suspicion/detection.

## How do people purchase Cannabis Edibles?

As with any illicit substance, these drugs can be accessed via various means. Where young people are concerned, many will rely upon 'social supply networks' with many seeking access to such substances through a friend or sibling etc.

In the absence of any social supply network, edibles will largely be sourced online, including via;

- The Dark Web
- Social Networking sites, such as Tiktok, Instagram, Snapchat and Facebook
- eBay

There are also websites advising how to make cannabis Coconut oil and Butter which is then used to make cakes, gummies, chocolate, fudge and even savoury food.



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Legitimate products, available within shops



Illegal Cannabis edible equivalent, in similar packaging



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## Cannabis Edibles Strength

- A typical Cannabis joint would allow for inhalation of approx. 12mg of THC.
- Using a bong would allow for inhalation of approx. 13mg of THC.
- Using a vape would allow for inhalation of approx. 17mg of THC.
- An edible sweet (on average) contains between 10-15mg of THC per sweet.

For a beginner with very low tolerance, unpleasant effects could be experienced at around 5-10mg of THC. For an experienced user unpleasant effects could be experienced at 25mg THC. A heavy user with high tolerance could experience unpleasant effects anywhere between 30 and 80mg of THC.

Edible sweets are commonly supplied in 500-600mg packs as per below, making accidental over-consumption highly likely, particularly in naïve users.



## What are the risks?

In the short term, the possible risks from consuming edibles are similar to those of smoking Cannabis, such as paranoia, confusion, hallucinations, panic attacks and vomiting etc. Edibles can take upto 3 hours for the peak effects to be felt by the user, so **it is very easy to over consume and experience such adverse reactions**, particularly amongst young people or inexperienced users.

As with all illegal drugs, **there is no way of knowing for certain what these products contain, or how potent they may be**. Nationally, there have been incidents where 'Cannabis' edibles which have caused adverse reactions have been found to contain no Cannabis at all, but instead other, often more potent illegal substances such as LSD, MDMA or Synthetic Cannabinoids (more commonly known as Spice or Mamba).

Should you encounter a student who is suffering from an adverse reaction to an edible, try to keep them calm, hydrated and seek advice from medical professionals as the symptoms they are experiencing may not yet have peaked.

## Additional Support:

Turning Point are our local drug and alcohol treatment service provider. Turning Point have a dedicated young persons team and will support any young person seeking to address a substance misuse issue.

Website: <http://wellbeing.turning-point.co.uk/leicestershire> Phone: 0330 303 6000



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