

Marijuana Edible Products and Youth

Overview

Over 200ⁱ medical marijuana stores in King County sell edible products with no safety regulations. The Liquor Control Board has [limited regulations](#)ⁱⁱ for new recreational stores (currently only 4 stores in Central and North Seattle). Many of these products appeal to youth with attractive flavors, colors and packaging. Products include chocolates, granola bars, party mix, soda and candies. **Medical marijuana dispensaries which account for the vast majority of these stores have no regulations to prevent selling products that appeal to youth and no age restrictions.**



Health Concerns

Marijuana edible products can have extremely high amounts of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) – the main psychoactive ingredient in marijuana, and the effects may take several hours to be felt, increasing the chance of overdose. Marijuana can have a harmful effect on youth's growing brains, reduce lifetime achievement, impair driving, and lead to addiction, especially among youth and long term users.ⁱⁱⁱ Marijuana edible products likely contributed to the deaths of two people in Colorado earlier this year.^{iv}

Marijuana overdoses by youth

The WA Poison Center reports that the number of pediatric overdoses for 2014 has already exceeded all of 2013. According to their Director, Dr. Alexander Garrard, "The increasing availability of marijuana edibles and lack of child-resistant packaging may ultimately contribute to a further increasing trend in pediatric exposures."^v Dr. Suzan Mazor, of Children's Hospital says their emergency room has already seen several cases of unintentional marijuana ingestion.^{vi}

Action needed

There are no reasons why marijuana products that appeal to youth should be sold. Local jurisdictions can and should pass laws to protect the health and welfare of children. **We are asking the Board of Health – Seattle & King County to pass an immediate emergency ban on marijuana edible products that appeal to youth and to convene a subcommittee to consider other policy remedies.** The board meets December 18th at 1:30pm, King County Council Chambers, 10th Floor, King County Courthouse, [516 3rd Avenue](#), Rm 1001, Seattle, WA 98104. Comments can be sent to the BOH Chair, Joe McDermott Joe.McDermott@kingcounty.gov, (206) 477-1008 or: <http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/BOH.aspx>

Resources

Marijuana Mixer: Teen Use, Child Ingestion, by Dr. Wendy Sue Swanson, Seattle Children's Hospital 10/15/14. <http://seattlemamadoc.seattlechildrens.org/marijuana-mixer-teen-use-child-ingestion/>

Washington Poison Center, Toxics Trend Report, Cannabis September 2014
<http://www.wapc.org/toxic-trends-report-cannabis-october-3rd-2014/>

Citations

ⁱ <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/govbeat/wp/2014/04/08/retail-marijuana-sales-in-washington-face-regulatory-delays/>

ⁱⁱ http://www.liq.wa.gov/publications/rules/OTS-6471_1Final.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ Nora D. Volkow, M.D., et.al. Adverse Health Effects of Marijuana Use, New England Journal of Medicine; 370:2219-2227 June 5, 2014

^{iv} Healy, Jack. After 5 Months of Sales, Colorado Sees the Downside of a Legal High. NY Times, May 31, 2014
http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/01/us/after-5-months-of-sales-colorado-sees-the-downside-of-a-legal-high.html?_r=0

^v Washington Poison Center, Toxics Trend Report, Cannabis September 2014. <http://www.wapc.org/toxic-trends-report-cannabis-october-3rd-2014/>

^{vi} Pembroke, Meghan. More kids accidentally poisoned by legal marijuana, study finds. Children's Hospital, May 28, 2013,
<http://pulse.seattlechildrens.org/more-kids-accidentally-poisoned-by-legal-marijuana-study-finds/>