



# THE CONNECTION

IOWA GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL POLICY

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## NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

When action taken by several states to legalize marijuana is discussed, most people likely assume the talk is about the same marijuana that was available 20-30 years ago.

Often times that is not the case, as advanced techniques have evolved to produce ever more potent marijuana that is being sold in diverse ways, such as in food products.

Without a proper understanding of the powerful impact these newer products can have on users and others, unfortunate events are unfolding.

For example, several areas in the western U.S. have experienced an increase in home "hash lab" fires.

Also, marijuana-infused food products, or edibles, are being consumed by unsuspecting children that end up in hospital emergency rooms.

This issue of "The Connection" tries to more fully inform Iowans about how marijuana products have recently diversified and grown in strength, as well as some of the dangers they pose to the citizens of our state, particularly Iowa youth.

Sincerely,

Steven F. Lukan

## POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *Director's Note*
- *More Potent Marijuana*
- *Marijuana Concentrates*
- *Signs and Symptoms*
- *BHO Labs*
- *"Vaping"*

## HELPFUL LINKS:

- *Iowa Substance Abuse Information Center*  
[www.drugfreeinfo.org](http://www.drugfreeinfo.org)
- *Iowa Medicine TLC*  
[www.iowamedicinetlc.org](http://www.iowamedicinetlc.org)
- *Office of Drug Control Policy*  
[www.iowa.gov/odcp](http://www.iowa.gov/odcp)
- *Partnership @ Drug Free Iowa.org*  
[www.drugfreeiowa.org](http://www.drugfreeiowa.org)
- *Iowa Poison Control Center*  
[www.iowapoinson.org](http://www.iowapoinson.org)

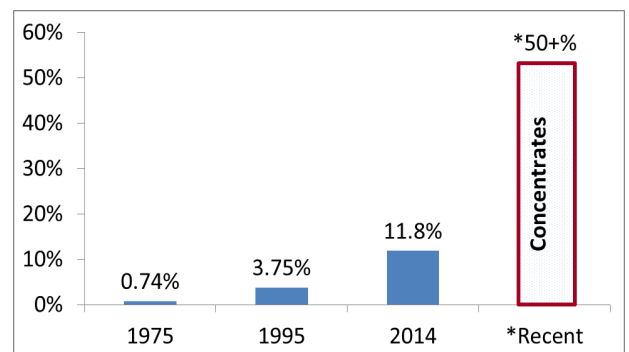
## MARIJUANA BECOMING MORE POTENT

Supercharged marijuana products are becoming more common, exposing a growing number of unsuspecting users to a highly potent drug. These concentrates contain very high levels of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), marijuana's main psychoactive ingredient that leads to highs, impairment, abuse and addiction.

Concentrates include hash oils, waxes and infused

edibles. Many of these new creations are produced in U.S. states where marijuana is legal. Concentrates are often made in butane hash oil (BHO) labs that are volatile, resulting in fires, explosions and injuries. More of these new marijuana products are making their way into Iowa too. The State crime lab reports concentrates make up about 10% of recent marijuana submissions by law enforcement.

**Marijuana's Increasing Potency**  
U.S. Seizures, Concentration of THC by % of Weight



## NEW MARIJUANA: MUCH MORE THAN “WEED”

In addition to the “weed” many think of when discussing marijuana, new “concentrates” come in other forms. Here’s what Iowans should watch for to prevent the use of new high octane marijuana.

### Marijuana-Infused Edibles (food and drink products)



Ingestion of edibles infused with marijuana concentrates is a concern, particularly among children. The growing list of edibles includes brownies, cookies, peanut butter, gummy chews, other candies and soda drinks. Edibles often contain very high THC levels, and their delayed effect on unsuspecting users can be dangerous. Small children are attracted to edibles by products and packaging.

### Hash Oil (aka: honey oil or 7:10)



Hash oil is chemically extracted from the cannabis plant with a solvent, producing an amber or brown colored viscous liquid. In terms of psychoactivity, a drop or two equals a single “joint.” Hash oils are often used in vape devices (e.g., e-cigarettes). THC estimate: 40-80%.

### Marijuana Wax (aka: budder, crumble, earwax)



Wax is created by whipping hash oil during THC extraction, resulting in a consistency similar to earwax. Dabbing is inhaling vapor from wax on a heated surface. THC estimate: 50-80%.



### Shatter

Shatter is a yellow or amber colored thin cake made with multiple steps including a pressure vacuum. THC estimate: may exceed 80%.



## MARIJUANA IS ADDICTIVE: SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

To date, long-term effects of marijuana concentrate use are not fully known. But, more psychologically and physically intense reactions are possible, based on what we do know about the effects of plant marijuana use. Some of these effects may include:

- Paranoia
- Anxiety or Psychosis
- Panic Attacks
- Hallucinations or Distorted Perceptions
- Increased Heart Rate and Blood Pressure
- Disrupted Learning or Memory
- Impaired Coordination and Slowed Reaction Time
- Addiction



Many users of marijuana concentrates prefer the vaporizer, or e-cigarette, delivery system, because it’s smokeless, odorless and easy to hide or conceal. This “vaping” is a concern in schools and elsewhere among youth, because it can produce a nearly instant “high” with little or no detection.



THC extraction labs like this one in Puyallup, Washington, are increasing in frequency and related explosions, fires and subsequent injuries.



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