

A Closer Look at CBD Oil

Cannabidiol, commonly referred to as CBD oil, is growing in popularity throughout the US including Nebraska. Its popularity has increased largely because of the claims that CBD oil can help with inflammation, anxiety and epileptic seizures (HealthDay News). CBD oil has been featured in numerous news stories and ads recently. The Lincoln Journal Star reported on a mother and son that were arrested in Scottsbluff in December of 2018 for selling CBD oil in their store. CBD oil is also being offered at shops in Lincoln and Omaha, but what exactly is CBD oil?

CBD is one of hundreds of components in cannabis (marijuana). CBD is the “second most prevalent of the active ingredients of marijuana” according to Harvard Medical School. However, CBD does not cause a user to get “high”, like tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). CBD is also found in hemp, which is from the same species (*Cannabis Sativa*) as marijuana. Although CBD is found in both marijuana and hemp, CBD oil is commonly derived from hemp.

Cannabis oil has been used as a general term to describe CBD oil, hemp oil or cannabis oil, but typically cannabis oil is a mixture of CBD and THC. CBD oil does not contain THC or contains trace amounts (0.3% THC or less).



The legal debate of cannabidiol is a complicated one. In 2018, Nebraska Attorney General Doug Peterson released a memo stating “Cannabidiol has been and continues to be included in Nebraska’s Uniform Controlled Substances Act’s legal definition of “marijuana.” (See, Neb. Rev. Stat. § 28-401(13)). This means that, with two exceptions, cannabidiol is a Schedule I controlled substance.” The exceptions are a UNMC study to possess CBD for the medical study of seizures (LB 390) and if a drug contains CBD that is FDA approved (LB 487). Furthermore, with the exception of the situations listed above “it remains illegal to possess, manufacture, distribute, dispense, or possess with the intent to manufacture, distribute, or dispense. Such conduct is subject to prosecution for illegally possessing or trafficking a Schedule I controlled substance.” In December of 2018, Congress passed the 2018 Farm Bill that includes the legalization of cultivating hemp and removes hemp from the Controlled Substances Act. However, if a hemp product is marketed with a “claim of therapeutic benefit, or with any other disease claim”, it must be approved by the FDA for the intended purpose (FDA.gov). It is illegal to market CBD as food or a dietary supplement without the approval of the FDA. The FDA previously sent warning letters to businesses selling CBD oil, but the legalization of hemp may continue to exacerbate the problem. Time will tell how Nebraska law enforcement and the FDA will respond to the selling of CBD oil.

There is evidence that CBD has medical benefits. In 2018, the FDA approved medication, Epidiolex, to treat two forms of epilepsy in children. Studies suggest that CBD may also help people with anxiety and insomnia to fall asleep and stay asleep. Other studies show that CBD may reduce inflammation caused by arthritis, but these studies have yet to be completed on humans (Harvard Health Publishing).

Although, there is evidence that CBD does have medical benefits, it is recommended that CBD oil only be taken under supervision of a physician. Short term effects may include nausea and fatigue, but other side effects may occur due to interactions with other medications or other chemicals found in the CBD product. CBD oil is considered a supplement by the FDA, which means it is not regulated by the FDA. The

label on a bottle of CBD oil may not accurately detail its contents. A 2017 study by the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine found that 7 of 10 CBD products did not contain the amount of CBD indicated on the label and 1 in 5 contained THC. THC can increase anxiety or worsen seizures, which is very problematic considering CBD oil is used primarily to reduce anxiety and seizures. CBD can also cause blood thinning and interactions with other medications (HealthyDay News).

CBD oil should only be taken under the supervision of a medical doctor. More research needs to be done to understand the effects of CBD on the body and developing brain. If you find your child is using CBD oil, determine the reason for their desire to use. Youth may self-medicate to alleviate symptoms from anxiety or depression, for example. Then talk to your pediatrician about all of the options for treatment.

Resources:

<https://drugfree.org/parent-blog/what-parents-should-know-about-kids-using-cbd/>

References:

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