



Delta-8: Is it safe?

The delta 8 molecule itself is generally considered safe simply because it has been known to science and a part of medicine for some time. Although the molecule is considered “safe,” safety issues arise in the lack of age gating, chemicals introduced in the processing methods, and lack of testing standards.

Age limitations are a serious issue with delta-8, as minors currently have access to the intoxicant. Although some states have clear regulations in place for consumers of delta-8 to be at least 18 or 21 years old, it is still possible for minors to obtain these products through false identification, purchasing them through others, or online. Additionally, safety issues can arise due to the misleading packaging of many products. Delta-8 products often resemble children's snacks such as gummies, cookies, and candy, which can lead to children ingesting intoxicants.[\[1\]](#)

While familiar to science, the exact health and safety profile of delta-8 products is unknown. Although its legality stems from being a ‘hemp-based’ product, the process required to obtain delta-8 in consumable amounts includes adding chemicals in the conversion process, many of which are left behind as a result.[\[2\]](#) There are no current testing standards for delta-8 products and the labels of products are often not accurate. This means that although a product may just be labeled as “delta-8,” other chemicals present are not required to be listed and there are no required testing mechanisms to check what is actually present in the products being consumed. Many delta-8 products often contain delta-9 THC which, unbeknownst to the consumer, is more potent and typically produces stronger side effects.[\[3\]](#) Without regulations, unscrupulous businesses can get away with using unsafe, cheaper production methods, putting the consumer at risk.

Several government agencies have released statements warning about delta-8 and the rise of its popularity. On September 14, 2021, the CDC (Center for Disease Control and Prevention) issued a Health Alert Network Health Advisory to alert public health departments, healthcare professionals, first responders, poison control centers, laboratories, and the public to the increase in availability and use of delta-8 products. The alert stressed the potential for adverse effects which could occur due to insufficient labeling of delta-8 products.[\[4\]](#) On May 4, 2022, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued several warning letters to companies it claims are illegally marketing products labeled as containing delta-8 in ways that violate the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FDCA). The FDA asserts that the manufacturers have deceived consumers by labeling delta-8 products as “hemp products” which can mislead consumers into thinking that they are not psychoactive. The letter to manufacturers also expressed concern about delta-8 products that are branded and marketed to appeal to young children.[\[5\]](#) At the same time, the FDA also issued a consumer update titled “5 Things to Know about Delta-8 Tetrahydrocannabinol - Delta-8 THC.” The consumer update warns that delta-8 products have not been evaluated or approved by the FDA, can cause adverse events, have psychoactive and intoxicating effects, use potentially harmful chemicals in production, and should be kept out of the reach of children and pets.[\[6\]](#) At this point, consumers must use their own discretion when purchasing products and hope that brands are being truthful.

[1] Community Alliance for Prevention, “Delta-8 THC Isn’t a Simple Solution,” Dryden Wire, May 6, 2022, <https://drydenwire.com/news/delta-8-thc-isnt-a-simple-solution/#:~:text=Delta%2D8%20THC%20products%20should,serious%20health%20issues%20in%20children.>

[2] Britt Erickson, “Delta-8-THC craze concerns chemists,” Chemical & Engineering News, August 30, 2021, <https://cen.acs.org/biological-chemistry/natural-products/Delta-8-THC-craze-concerns/99/i31>

[3] Lara Stewart, “What is the Different Between Delta 8 THC and Delta 9 THC?,” Discover, July 4, 2022, <https://www.discovermagazine.com/sponsored/what-is-the-difference-between-delta-8-thc-and-delta-9-thc>

[4] “Increases in Availability of Cannabis Products Containing Delta-8 THC and Reported Cases of Adverse Events,” Center for Disease Control and Prevention, September 14, 2021, <https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/2021/han00451.asp>

[5] “FDA Issues Warning Letters to Companies Illegally Selling CBD and Delta-8 THC Products,” U.S. Food and Drug Administration, May 4, 2022, <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-issues-warning-letters-companies-illegally-selling-cbd-and-delta-8-thc-products>

[6] “5 Things to Know about Delta-8 Tetrahydrocannabinol- Delta-8 THC,” U.S. Food and Drug Administration, May 4, 2022, <https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/5-things-know-about-delta-8-tetrahydrocannabinol-delta-8-thc>