

# CBD, Hemp & Marijuana

## Debunking the Myths



In just the last few years, cannabidiol, commonly known as CBD, has become so popular, it's seemingly everywhere. Thousands of retailers are touting the benefits of CBD in their products for both pets and people. Forms, uses, and marketing claims vary widely. One thing is certain: under federal law, it is illegal to add CBD to a food or label CBD as a dietary supplement.

Without more high-quality research on CBD, what it can and cannot do remains both unclear and unproven. For this reason, always consult your physician or veterinarian before using any CBD product.

### Hemp vs. Marijuana: What's the Difference?

CBD is a chemical found in the *Cannabis sativa* plant, more commonly known as the hemp plant. CBD is currently being investigated for its potential medicinal qualities. Because both the hemp plant and the marijuana plant are from the same genus *Cannabis* (though from different species), they look alike and smell alike; so much so that police dogs tend to identify them as identical.

Both plants contain CBD and THC, though in much different amounts. Hemp, for example has only trace amounts of THC, whereas some of today's cultivated strains of marijuana have little to no trace amounts of CBD. THC or tetrahydrocannabinol, is the main psychoactive ingredient in marijuana that produces a "high." It is proven medically or therapeutically beneficial.

### What's Legal? What Isn't?

In 2018, the U.S. Farm Bill established a Domestic Hemp Production Program that made hemp-derived CBD oil, which contains THC content of no more than 3/10ths of a percent, federally legal in all states – including Ohio. Marijuana-derived CBD oil is not legal.

In 2019, Ohio signed House Bill 57 into law, allowing for hemp – and products made from it – to be legally produced in the state.

### Epidiolex: The Only FDA-Approved CBD

Though retailers and marketers may want consumers to believe their CBD products can cure everything from acne to anxiety, the truth is, Epidiolex is the first, and currently only, drug comprised of CBD.

Used to treat two rare and severe forms of epilepsy, Epidiolex was approved in 2018 following three randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled clinical trials.

Citing "limited data about CBD safety" and "real risks that need to be considered before taking CBD for any reason,"<sup>2</sup> the FDA has made public its concerns about the lack of regulation and control. In the meantime, without the oversight of the FDA, sales of CBD products are skyrocketing.

As for CBD oil derived from marijuana, in Ohio it must follow the guidelines of Ohio's Medical Marijuana Control Program. That means:

- It can only be sold by state-licensed dispensaries.
- It can only be sold to persons who legally hold an Ohio medical marijuana card.

CBD oil extracted from the hemp plant can be sold legally outside of the Program. That means it does not need to follow Ohio's Medical Marijuana Control Program guidelines.

## Does CBD Work?

CBD shows some promise for therapeutic benefit. There is not, however, enough evidence-based research on the medical effectiveness of CBD products to conclude that they do, indeed, work.

## Is It Safe?

Pure CBD seems to be safe for many people, though there isn't enough scientific data to confirm it. There is no evidence to suggest that CBD is safe for those with compromised immune systems, or those who are pregnant or breastfeeding.

## What We Know To Be Factual

While the effects of CBD on the brain are not entirely understood, here's what is currently known:<sup>1</sup>

- CBD is the second most prevalent active ingredient of marijuana.
- CBD is an essential component of medical marijuana.
- By itself, CBD does not cause a "high."
- Some people experience side effects with CBD, including nausea, fatigue, dry mouth, reduced appetite, and irritability.
- The federal government puts CBD in the same classification as marijuana.

## About This Campaign

Because much of the public conversation surrounding marijuana has been based on anecdotes rather than science, Prevention Action Alliance and the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services created this campaign to help people better understand the facts about marijuana and its effects.

If you found this article helpful, we encourage you to share it with others. You can also find other fact sheets about marijuana at: [preventionactionalliance.org/marijuana](http://preventionactionalliance.org/marijuana)

If you have concerns about your own use of marijuana or a loved one's, and wish to seek help, go to: [findtreatment.samhsa.gov/](http://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/)

## Contact Us

For more information on hemp, please contact us at:  
Prevention Action Alliance  
(614) 540-9985  
[preventionactionalliance.org](http://preventionactionalliance.org)

## About Us

Prevention  
Action Alliance



Prevention Action Alliance is a 501(c)3 nonprofit located in Columbus, Ohio. We're dedicated to leading healthy communities in the prevention of substance misuse and the promotion of mental health wellness. Learn more at [preventionactionalliance.org](http://preventionactionalliance.org).

The mission of the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) is to provide statewide leadership on the topics of mental health and addiction prevention, treatment, and recovery. Learn more about OhioMHAS at [mha.ohio.gov](http://mha.ohio.gov).

1. [health.harvard.edu/blog/cannabidiol-cbd-what-we-know-and-what-we-dont-2018082414476](http://health.harvard.edu/blog/cannabidiol-cbd-what-we-know-and-what-we-dont-2018082414476)

2. [fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/what-you-need-know-and-what-were-working-find-out-about-products-containing-cannabis-or-cannabis](http://fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/what-you-need-know-and-what-were-working-find-out-about-products-containing-cannabis-or-cannabis)