

'Dabbing' is becoming more prevalent in our community. Dabbing refers to inhaling dabs – highly concentrated doses of cannabis stored as marijuana wax, oil, or concentrates that are vaporized. Dabs are made by extracting resins from green leafy marijuana, which raises the drug's THC content from the typical 15% THC to 60-90% THC. That means a single inhalation of concentrate delivers the THC equivalent to 3-10 inhalations of herbal cannabis. Because dabs are so concentrated, users may test positive for THC on a drug screen 2-3 times longer than when using leafy marijuana. Street names include "dabs," "butter," "budder," "amber," "honey," "oil," "710" (OIL upside down), or "BHO," which stands for "Butane Honey Oil" or "Butane Hash Oil." Concentrates that look like amber-colored glass shards are called "shatter."

Concentrates are commonly extracted using butane (when run through the dry herbal marijuana buds, it extracts the THC). The watery/waxy THC is then heated to bubble off the butane. Using butane in this way has caused multiple explosions all over the country, severely injuring and even killing people of all ages.

Once packaged, this product can simply look like a small portion of wax. High school students conceal the waxy BHO by placing it in Carmex lip balm containers and taking it to school. Concentrates can also be laced with other drugs or added to food.

To smoke the marijuana concentrate, the person uses a specific bong or pipe called an "Oil Rig," or many people use what looks like a standard e-cigarette, but is specific to concentrates and oils. These e-cigarettes are very discrete and can be hard to identify as drug paraphernalia since they put off very little odor. Another tool used for the extracts is referred to as a dabber, which is a small rod that is made of either glass or metal and it is used to scoop the dose into the device being used.

Signs & Symptoms of Use

In addition to incredibly high THC content, marijuana concentrates have non-traditional and sometimes dangerous symptoms. Side effects from dabbing include intense coughing, sweating like you just ran a mile, and extreme tiredness. Some users report more dangerous side effects, such as severe hallucinations, elevated paranoia, unconsciousness, extreme highs (even from small portions), and high levels of impairment. Marijuana wax may also be hazardous if there is a significant amount of butane residue in the extract, which could damage the lungs when combusted or vaporized. Hundreds of people have been hospitalized after consuming too much marijuana wax. There is not a good understanding of the long-term health effects and physiological risks associated with dabbing because there haven't been good studies of this method of using marijuana.

Individuals of all ages are turning to dabs over traditional marijuana because it's easier to hide. The oils don't produce the level of odor that traditional marijuana would produce, so it's much easier to smoke it in public utilizing an e-cigarette or vaporizer.

Unfortunately, this decision could be tragic.

For more information, please visit our website at www.drugfreeadamscounty.org.