

GROWERTALKS

Corr on Cannabis

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Biden Bites & Trump Truffles

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As a result of ballot measures approved during the November 2020 election, more than two-thirds of the U.S. population will have state-legal access to cannabis with a THC content greater than 0.3% and the entire country has access to low-THC cannabis. All of Canada and many other countries have country-wide access.

Ironically, it appears the U.S. election caused jitters and some people turned to cannabis for relief. Reports came in of users making cannabis-infused Biden Brownie Bites or Trump Truffles. For those not handy in the kitchen, cannabis shops reported upticks in sales prior to the election of gummies, cookies, chocolate, etc.—all infused with cannabis.

However, as philosophized by Eeyore (Winnie-the-Pooh's chronically depressed, but wise, gray donkey friend): "They're funny things, accidents. You never have them till you're having them." Due to increasing availability of

cannabis in the legal marketplace, accidental consumption of cannabis is increasing.

Accidental cannabis highs are not new, of course. People have talked about contact highs since before the Grateful Dead played their first concert. For years, people have accidentally consumed brownies just like those grandma baked, only to be surprised they contained a secret ingredient. What's changed is the legal availability of cannabis, especially items that look innocuous, yet contain significant amounts of cannabis.

A prime example is the story of a couple who received a package full of various types of candy. It'd been sent on behalf of a relative who was out of town with the understanding the recipient would hold the package until the relative returned. The couple decided reasonable payment for holding the package until the intended recipient returned would be to eat a bit of the candy.

Little did they know the candy had been purchased in a cannabis-legal state and was shipped to their state where cannabis was not legal. In an effort to make things look legal, the shipper had wrapped the candy in standard commercial labels, replacing the cannabis-required wrappers that include the amount of THC.

The couple had no way to know anything was out of the ordinary, so he ate a chocolate bar and she ate several sour candies, both thinking they were eating standard-issue candy that could be purchased at any convenience store.

Oops.

As they started feeling a bit strange, they contacted the sender and discovered what they actually ate. He'd consumed a candy bar with 100 milligrams of THC that was intended to be consumed in multiple servings. To put that in perspective, most recommendations for users of cannabis suggest starting with 5 milligrams before trying anything stronger. In other words, he was getting the equivalent of 20 times the recommendation. She was fortunate; the sour candies had a much lower dose. She just got a little giggly. He wasn't so fortunate. He spent 12 hours passed out in front of a toilet, only gaining consciousness to vomit.

This is not an isolated example of accidental consumption.

It's not only humans that are discovering cannabis accidentally. As cannabis users are more casual about use, they're more likely to leave cannabis in plain sight rather than keeping it hidden and pets are finding tasty tidbits in easy reach. Some reports say THC may be as much as three times more potent for dogs as it is for humans. Dogs that consume cannabis can exhibit vomiting, lack of coordination and even seizures. Chocolate and artificial sweeteners can be harmful to dogs and may be components of cannabis edibles, which complicate the efforts of a veterinarian to treat the pet.

Dogs can encounter cannabis in unexpected ways. A dog owner walking his dog through a park after a music festival wasn't fast enough to stop his dog from gobbling up something off the ground. I understand how that could happen. My dogs, like most dogs, determine if something is edible by eating it.

In this instance the dog soon developed neurological symptoms severe enough the owner took him to the vet, thinking the dog might be having a stroke. A urine test confirmed THC. The assumption is the dog had consumed the remnants of a cannabis joint that had been discarded during the festival.

The good news to all these stories is there are seldom any long-term effects from inadvertent consumption of cannabis other than some embarrassment and a lesson learned. Nevertheless—a word to the wise—if you don't know your baker, you might end up baked. **GT**

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