

# Kratom (kray·dum)



## Other names

Thang	Kakuam	Ketum
Biak	Thom	Herbal Speedball

## What is Kratom?

- Kratom refers to both *Mytragyna speciosa*, a tropical tree that is native to Southeast Asia, and the leaves and the leaf extracts of that tree that are used for medicinal and recreational purposes.<sup>(1, 2, 3)</sup>
- Kratom has historically been used to self-treat various conditions including acute and/or chronic pain, coughing, diarrhea, anxiety, depression, attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), bipolar disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), opioid use disorder and opioid, prescription and other drug dependency withdrawal symptoms.<sup>(1, 3)</sup>
- Kratom is also used as a substitute for opioid medication and illicit opioid drugs.<sup>(3)</sup>
- In low dosages, kratom produces stimulant effects comparable to cocaine; in high doses, kratom produces sedative effects.<sup>(2, 3)</sup>
- In the U.S., there are no legally available prescription or over-the-counter drug products containing kratom or its known alkaloids, and it continues to be an unapproved substance that the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) warns the public against using to treat medical conditions.<sup>(1)</sup>
- Additionally, kratom is not lawfully marketed as a dietary supplement nor can it be lawfully added to food based on determinations made by the FDA.<sup>(1)</sup>
- Kratom is not a controlled substance; however, some states, including Arizona, do have regulations and prohibitions against the use and possession of kratom. Generally, it is sold online and in various vape and smoke shops as well as some convenience stores.<sup>(2, 4)</sup>
- 7-hydroxymitragynine (7-OH), a significant alkaloid naturally found in the kratom plant, is the active metabolite of the plant's primary alkaloid, mitragynine. 7-OH can be sold separately from kratom and is often found in concentrated forms, designed to generate a stronger effect on users. Many of the kratom products advertised today contain concentrated amounts of 7-OH and others are advertised explicitly as containing 7-OH.<sup>(5)</sup>

## Kratom in Arizona

Arizona passed the Arizona Kratom Consumer Protection Act into law in 2019.<sup>(6)</sup> Key provisions of the law include:

- Kratom products cannot be sold to people under the age of 18.
- Retailers cannot sell kratom products that are adulterated or contaminated with dangerous non-kratom substances.
- Kratom products must be properly labeled with the amount of kratom and 7-OH in it.
- Kratom products cannot contain levels of 7-OH in the alkaloid fraction greater than 2 percent of the alkaloid composition of the product.

## How is Kratom Used?

Common methods of use include: chewing the leaves, brewing dried or powdered leaves into tea, straight powder ingestion or mixing the dried powder into food or drinks, ingestion of capsules or pills, ingestion of highly concentrated kratom extracts and tinctures and even smoking, though that is less common.

## Effects of Kratom Use

Kratom has dose-dependent effects that are both stimulant-like and opiate-like. In low doses, kratom primarily produces a stimulant effect in the body that can typically last for 60-90 minutes. Typical reported effects include increased energy, alertness, sociability and heightened libido. In moderate to high doses, kratom produces opiate-like, sedative effects that can last for several hours. Typical effects include pain relief, drowsiness, a sense of calm and a euphoric high that is generally less intense than with opioids.<sup>(4)</sup>

Kratom's common mild effects can include:

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|-----------------------|--------------------|
| • drowsiness          | • sweating         |
| • dizziness           | • dry mouth        |
| • nausea and vomiting | • loss of appetite |
| • constipation        | • itchiness        |

The less common, but more serious, side effects include:

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|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| • liver damage        | • respiratory depression |
| • seizures            | • physical dependence    |
| • psychosis           | • addiction              |
| • high blood pressure |                          |

## What to Do if Someone is Experiencing Adverse Effects:

Naloxone may be effective for kratom and 7-OH overdoses. If someone is experiencing respiratory or central nervous system depression (lethargy and hypoxia) after kratom or 7-OH use, naloxone may reverse these effects and should be utilized.

1. Call 911 immediately!
2. Administer naloxone, if available.
3. Try to keep the person awake and breathing.
4. Lay the person on their side (in the recovery position) to prevent choking.
5. Stay with the person until emergency assistance arrives.

(1) [https://www.fda.gov/news-events/public-health-focus/fda-and-kratom#:~:text=There%20are%20no%20FDA%2Dapproved,substance%20use%20disorder%20\(SUD\)](https://www.fda.gov/news-events/public-health-focus/fda-and-kratom#:~:text=There%20are%20no%20FDA%2Dapproved,substance%20use%20disorder%20(SUD))

(2) [https://www.dea.gov/sites/default/files/2020-06/Kratom-2020\\_0.pdf](https://www.dea.gov/sites/default/files/2020-06/Kratom-2020_0.pdf)

(3) <https://nd.az.gov/sites/default/files/news/Kratom.pdf>

(4) <https://drugabuse.com/drugs/kratom/effects-use/>

(5) <https://www.fda.gov/media/187899/download>

(6) <https://www.azleg.gov/legtext/54leg/1r/bills/hb2550s.pdf>