

# MYTHS VS. FACTS

Exposing the truth about  
**CBD PRODUCTS**

CONSUMERS FOR  
**Safe CBD**

A PROJECT OF THE NATIONAL CONSUMERS LEAGUE



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**MYTH:**

**CBD products relieve stress, decrease anxiety, and improve health.**



**FACT:**

While CBD products are commonly promoted as an effective treatment for a broad variety of medical conditions, there is not enough scientific evidence and data to prove these health benefits. These unproven claims put patients at risk as these products have not been demonstrated to be safe or effective.

2



**MYTH:**

**CBD products are all natural and therefore safe and healthy.**



**FACT:**

The U.S. Surgeon General warned that the long-term effects of CBD consumption are largely unknown. Clinical trials show CBD is associated with significant and potentially dangerous drug interactions, liver damage, or other adverse health effects. A recent independent testing of the 240 top-selling CBD products found that 70 percent were highly contaminated with substances including lead, arsenic, herbicides, pesticides, and toxic mold.<sup>1</sup> The FDA has warned women who are pregnant or breastfeeding to stay away from these products.<sup>2</sup>

3



**MYTH:**

**No one has ever been harmed by using CBD products.**



**FACT:**

Dozens of CBD-related incidents across the country have been reported in the U.S. More than 50 people in Utah were made sick by consuming synthetic substances that were marketed as CBD oil.<sup>3</sup> Others have reportedly lost their jobs after failing drug tests revealing THC from CBD products. The American Association of Poison Control Centers has reported over 1,200 cases related to CBD in 2019.<sup>4</sup>

1. <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/independent-lab-testing-critical-for-cbd-formulas-300936329.html>

2. <https://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/Article/2019/10/17/FDA-warns-pregnant-and-breast-feeding-women-to-avoid-CBD-and-cannabis>

3. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/janetwburns/2018/05/26/officials-say-fake-cbd-poisoned-at-least-52-people-in-utah-last-winter/#362185f57dd3>

4. American Association of Poison Control Centers, Alert: Cannabidiol (CBD) <https://aapcc.org/CBD-Alert>

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MYTH:

**“Pure” CBD products contain no THC (the psychoactive component of marijuana that is responsible for euphoria) and will not get you “high.”**



FACT:

Most CBD products contain some THC, and even products that claim to be “zero THC” may still have THC, in some cases enough to cause intoxication and impairment. This heightens the risk involved in consuming CBD, particularly for young children.

5



MYTH:

**The FDA penalizes all CBD manufacturers that make false claims and ensures unsafe CBD products are taken off the market.**



FACT:

While the FDA has issued warning letters to the unregulated CBD industry’s most egregious actors, CBD products are still sold online and in stores despite them being untested and illegal. Many consumers are understandably confused about CBD: what is legal, what is safe, the potential for harmful contaminants, the inclusion of other dangerous and intoxicating substances, whether any CBD products are beneficial, and more.

6



MYTH:

**CBD product labeling can be trusted as accurate.**



FACT:

Numerous reports demonstrate that CBD products are frequently mislabeled. A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association<sup>5</sup> found that seven of 10 CBD products are mislabeled. Consumers using unapproved CBD products run the risk of ingesting harmful contaminants.

7



MYTH:

**A small dose of CBD is great for anxious pets, children, and patients with chronic conditions.**



FACT:

Pet owners and parents should be wary, and patients should consider the potential dangers of replacing prescribed medications with CBD products, mixing CBD with other treatments, or ingesting unknown amounts of CBD when using a variety of CBD products. The dangers of unknown contaminants in untested CBD products heighten the risk.

5. Bonn-Miller MO, Loflin MJE, Thomas BF, Marcu JP, Hyke T, Vandrey R. Labeling Accuracy of Cannabidiol Extracts sold Online. JAMA. 2017;318(17):1708–1709. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2017.11909>