



Did You Know?

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Although kratom is not necessarily a new drug, it is one that is recently making headlines and a drug that you may want to know about. Kratom comes from a tropical tree that is grown in Southeast Asia, in places such as Thailand, Malaysia, and Myanmar. The kratom tree is in the same family as the coffee tree; however, kratom delivers much different effects than coffee.

Kratom has been used by natives of Southeast Asia for thousands of years. When ingested, the herbal drug provides psychoactive and stimulant effects. Kratom was often used by Thai and Malaysian laborers to aid them when working long, hard hours. The drug also works in a way that is similar to opium to relieve pain. In some instances, the drug has also been used in Thailand to manage opioid withdrawal. Despite Thailand's efforts to make the drug illegal (it is illegal to plant the tree, and kratom is currently placed in the Category V classifications of narcotics), it is still widely used in Asia, and it is legal in most of the United States.

Facts about Kratom:

- Kratom is widely legal in United States, except for Indiana, Tennessee, Vermont, and Wyoming.
- There are no recognized legitimate medical uses for kratom in the United States.
- Kratom acts as a stimulant in low doses, but can produce sedative effects (similar to that of opium) in high doses.
- Effects from the drug can occur within five to ten minutes after ingestion and can last anywhere from two to five hours.
 - As a stimulant, kratom produces increased alertness, increased physical energy, and talkativeness.
 - Acute effects from kratom include: chest pains, confusion, convulsions, dizziness, dry mouth, hallucinations, itching, loss of appetite, nausea, seizures, sweating, and psychosis.
- Kratom is addictive and does produce withdrawal symptoms.
- Kratom is widely available on the Internet, but is also available at headshops and convenience stores around the country.
- When sold online, kratom can come in many forms, including: whole or crushed leaves, powder, extract, powder in capsules, and resin pellets.
- The drug is most commonly consumed orally; either by chewing the leaves or mixing into teas or other drink forms
 - Two common drink forms are 1.) a mixture of boiled kratom leaves, mosquito coils, and cola or 2.) a mixture of boiled cough syrup, kratom leaves and cola served with ice.
- Kratom bars are now becoming quite popular in various states throughout the country including Florida, Colorado, New York, and North Carolina. Patrons of kratom bars sip on brewed "varieties, varying in strength, from plastic bottles that resemble those for fruit juice."

What Can You Do?

- Know that kratom is out there and legally available. Understanding the drug and its effects are the first defense in keeping you and loved ones safe.

Sources: Drug Enforcement Administration (http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_chem_info/kratom.pdf) and The New York Times

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