

## Know! CBD – Miracle in a Bottle or Modern-Day Snake Oil?



If you haven't yet heard of CBD oil, you will soon. It's one of the hottest, trendiest products on the market, and it claims to be a cure-all for whatever ails you. Celebrities are not only talking about and endorsing a variety of CBD oil-infused products, but they're also creating and selling product lines of their own. CBD oil can come in everything from your morning coffee to your nighttime facial crème. It seems everyone wants to get in on the latest craze.

Young people are becoming increasingly more aware of the vast claims made about this "magical elixir" as well; so it is important to learn more about it so that you can share the facts with them and help them cut through the extravagant marketing claims.

### **What is this supposed miracle potion; is it safe; is it legal; and what exactly does it do?**

By definition, CBD is short for cannabidiol, a compound found in and extracted from the cannabis plant. CBD oil may contain very low levels of THC, the compound in marijuana that produces a "high" – but that is not always the case. The claims of health and wellness benefits stretch far and wide. In fact, ads for CBD oil claim it can address:

- Inflammation
- Pain
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Post-traumatic stress
- Insomnia
- Cancer
- Liver health

In addition to assertions of medical benefits, there are claims that CBD can prevent hangovers, help with acne and assist in social situations. You can now find CBD in health and beauty care for both people and pets; lip balms, bath bombs, sleeping masks, shampoos, massage oils, anti-wrinkle serums, anti-acne lotions, soaps, mascara, dog food, and cat treats. You name it and there seems to be a CBD oil-infused product popping up for it.



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Health experts say consumers should be advised—just because a product is being sold online or on a store shelf does not mean it is credible or dependable.

Necessary research is being conducted with regard to the potential benefits CBD may provide. This research has led to the [Food and Drug Administration approving a cannabidiol-based drug called Epidiolex](#). It is the **first and only** FDA-approved prescription cannabidiol (CBD), and it can be prescribed for Dravet and LGS—two severe forms of epilepsy. Preliminary research also indicates that CBD may aid in reducing the symptoms of schizophrenia. As for other benefits, the jury is still out.

Unlike the CBD lip balms and serums you might find on the Internet, Epidiolex also has instructions for dosing the drug and lists of known adverse reactions and drug interactions that can only come with clinical tests.

The newest claim is that marijuana and CBD could help people avoid opioids. However, according to National Families in Action and The Marijuana Report, people who use various forms of marijuana for medical use are more—not less—likely to abuse prescription drugs including painkillers, stimulants, and tranquilizers.

Physicians also warn that research is in its infancy and there are potential hazards with experimenting with CBD. Because of the general lack of oversight of the various CBD products available, there is no way of knowing exactly what is in these products. There can be contaminants from pesticides, herbicides, and solvents used in the extraction process. There can also be a mislabeling of the amount of THC in a product, which can be especially concerning for children. And when researchers put a large number of CBD products to the test, many showed to contain synthetic CBD, while others contained little or no CBD at all—contrary to what the packaging promoted. CBD can have negative interactions with other medications as well. And health experts say that there are many different strains of the cannabis plant with differing strengths and differing effects, and that purity and dosage in many of these products on the market are not reliable.

As far as the legality of CBD oil, that depends on your state. But as far as the federal law is concerned, cannabis and cannabis products remain illegal in every state—other than prescription cannabidiol *Epidiolex*. Confusing, yes.

CBD may not exactly be today's snake oil, but it isn't likely to be the miracle in a bottle that so many people are banking on either. The good news is, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved **purified** CBD to treat two extreme forms of epilepsy. However, no other forms of CBD have been approved to treat any other disease or condition; nor has it been proven to take away our wrinkles or acne, aide in liver health or improve our pets' lives. While CBD may have further potential, it is important to allow the experts to conduct their research and take the appropriate measures to ensure that any product that reaches us and our family members are promoted in a factually correct manner, and its contents have been proven to be safe and effective.

**Sources:** [National Families in Action: The Marijuana Report – Fact Check, September 5, 2018](#). [The New York Times, Alex Williams: Why Is CBD Everywhere? Oct. 27, 2018](#). [State of Ohio, Board of Pharmacy: Clarification on Cannabidiol \(CBD\) Oil](#).