

'Childproof your weed': Protecting your kids from edibles

March 6 2023, by Cara Murez



With cannabis poisoning soaring among U.S. children, an expert from

Children's Hospital Los Angeles offers tips for keeping kids safe from so-called "edibles."

"The best way to keep your kids safe from marijuana edibles is not to have them in your home," [Dr. Colleen Kraft](#), an attending physician in the Department of Pediatrics, said in a hospital news release.

However, if you do have them at home, store them where your children can't get them.

Between 2017 and 2021, more than 7,000 children younger than 6 were exposed to edible [cannabis](#), according to the National Poison Data System.

The number of incidents rose during that span by 1,375%—from 207 incidents a year to 3,054. About 1 in 4 of those kids was hospitalized, many with severe complications such as breathing difficulties and critical care stays.

In more than 90% of cases, children found the toxic edibles at home.

Treat edible marijuana like you would any medication, Kraft said. Remove the edibles from their packaging and put them in child-resistant containers.

Put a "[marijuana edibles](#)" label on the containers and place them in a locked cabinet, Kraft added.

It may also help to buy edibles in packaging that is less enticing to children and doesn't look like a treat.

"These [products](#) often come in 'copycat' packaging that looks like real candy," Kraft said. "This is particularly dangerous for kids who are too

young to read."

Also, do not eat these products in front of your kids. Since edibles can trigger children's curiosity, it's better to consume them where your [kids](#) can't see you.

Ask other adults in households where your child visits to do the same. Talk with them about storing edibles safely. It is important that they listen.

"If [family](#) and [friends](#) use these products, they need to take the same precautions you would take," Kraft said.

If your child consumes a marijuana edible, look at its wrapper to see how much tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) it contains.

"Just one cookie or candy bar can lead to an overdose," Kraft said, noting the [small size](#) and weight of [children](#).

The body takes longer to process ingested THC than inhaled THC, Kraft said. Symptoms of marijuana poisoning, such as vomiting, slurred speech and breathing difficulties, may not appear until hours after the edible is consumed, Kraft said.

Call the poison control hotline if you think your child has ingested edible marijuana. It can be reached at 1-800-222-1222. If your child's symptoms are severe, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room immediately.

More information: The American Academy of Pediatrics has more on the [dangers of edible marijuana for children](#).

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