



Edibles: What A Long, Strange Trip It Will Be When Waiting for THC to Kick In

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BY KATE KASBEE ON AUGUST 15TH, 2018 AT 3:00 PM | UPDATED: AUGUST 15TH, 2018 AT 2:26 PM

CULTURE



Everyone remembers his or her first time nibbling on an edible.

For me, after eating an infused brownie, nothing happened for a while. That can be annoying if you're trying to time your high with watching Beyoncé's self-titled visual album, like I was — until 3 a.m. when I woke up stoned out of my mind.

In that moment of terror, the marijuana edible felt way more intense than anything I'd ever smoked. But is there scientific proof behind the commonly held belief that edibles hit you harder than smoking? Actually, there is.

It's All in The Liver

After eating a cannabinoid-infused edible, the cannabinoids travel through the digestive system and eventually make their way to the liver, where **THC** — the psychoactive chemical compound responsible for the intoxicating effect in cannabis — is turned into a compound called **11-Hydroxy-THC**. This metabolite is especially effective at crossing the blood-brain barrier and has a more psychedelic effect than THC. McGill University Associate Professor Dr. Mark A. Ware told the Daily Beast that the liver metabolizes THC into 11-Hydroxy-THC, **effects are combined** and compounds produce a much more intense high than smoking.

While the effects are stronger, it can take a while for the mind- and body-numbing effects of an edible to kick in. The THC first needs to be processed by the stomach, then metabolized by the liver before getting into the bloodstream, finally reaching the brain. This can take anywhere from 30 minutes to three hours, depending on metabolism.

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When Smoking or Vaping Are Best

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Looking to feel the effects of cannabis instantly and want a more predictable high? Consider smoking. When smoking weed, it bypasses the liver and doesn't metabolize 11-Hydroxy-THC, the compound that makes edibles feel so potent. The moment after a pull on a joint or a hit from a vape pen, the marijuana hits the bloodstream and travels straight to the brain. The effects of smoking weed peak after about 10 minutes, and begin to taper off over the following hour.

Most who have smoked weed and consumed edibles can attest to the difference in highs produced by each. While more potent, eating an edible is a discreet way to enhance a concert or another event where pulling out a vape pen is risky. Plus, the effects last for hours without having to re-dose. Keep in mind: Edible dosages aren't regulated, so it can be difficult to estimate how much is loaded in a gummy or a chocolate. Test limits slowly until you can, with as much accuracy as possible, estimate how much you can enjoyably handle.

Banner photography by Jessica Finkbeiner, Instagram: @ladylochjess and Amy Gillespie

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ABOUT AUTHOR

KATE KASBEE

Kate Kasbee is a health and wellness writer based in Chicago. She is the content creator, recipe developer and content strategist for the site Well Vegan and co-authored her first book "Frugal Vegan: Affordable, Easy and Delicious Vegan Cooking." Beyond health and wellness, Kate is an experienced travel and real estate writer, serving as a contributor to publications such as "Travel in Style" and "The Los Angeles Times Las Vegas Guide."

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- 16 COMMENTS
- CHUCK on AUGUST 17, 2018 4:45 PM

making your own edibles is cheap and easy, and allows you to titrate your doses so that your results are consistent.

REPLY >
- KAY on AUGUST 17, 2018 5:27 PM

Where can I find recipe to make own edibles.

REPLY >
- DONNA HING on AUGUST 17, 2018 6:22 PM

Just go to Youtube.com....you can learn absolutely anything on there!!

REPLY >
- BWANA on AUGUST 17, 2018 5:21 PM

Hmmm. I believe that in CA, at least as of July 1, 2018, dosage in edibles is regulated.

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You're correct, since July 1st, 2018 edibles are limited to 100mg maximum. However, manufacturers and clinics are permitted to sell their existing stock until gone. That seems to be causing some confusion among users.

REPLY >

DINO DAMONTE on AUGUST 18, 2018 1:55 PM

Yes it is

REPLY >

SHARON M ARNOLD on AUGUST 17, 2018 6:19 PM

One thing about edibles is the timing as we know. For me personally, I smoke a bowl when I can adjust the amount to still be able to handle my business. For my Brownies (ooh wee) I eat those like mid morning on the weekend when I know I'm gonna be in the bed with the remote control all day. Doze off wake up and repeat. 🌟🌟🌟🌟🌟

REPLY >

WARREN BOBROW on AUGUST 17, 2018 7:09 PM

I wrote the book named cannabis cocktails. Finding the happy medium on dosing is not difficult. It just takes a clear mind and decarbed cannabis. I use the Ardent Nova for the decarb and the magical butter machine for the infusion. 1/4 oz of decarbed cannabis makes a 750ml bottle of craft spirits, sing.

REPLY >

GARRY on AUGUST 18, 2018 11:51 AM

Warren, we've been hosting cannabis infused dinner parties. We've been looking for cocktail recipes. Just ordered your book on Amazon after seeing your comment here. Thanks for writing and publishing the book. Looking forward to the recipe testing!
Garry

REPLY >

ORTEGA on AUGUST 18, 2018 3:21 AM

I make my own tincture with a quarter ounce of top shelf flower shake and 16 ounces of coconut oil or food grade glycerine, one for cooking and the other wayer soluable. After straining the liquid for tincture, I mix the shake with a tube of cookie dough and bake cookies. The tincture soaked cheese cloth is put in hot water for cannabis tea. Use a small crockpot to cook the liquid and shake, 1 hour on low, then 1 hour on high. Turn off and let cool to strain liquid tincture. Simple and economical. Keep in refridgerator in dark container.

REPLY >

360DUNK on AUGUST 18, 2018 6:40 AM

I like to wait till the end of the day, when dinner is mostly digested. That way, there's no impaired driving during daylight hours. At night, a 10-15 mg dose of edibles combined with smoking half a joint, is all I need and it's been the formula for a good decade now. No arrests, no tickets, no worries.

REPLY >

MILO on AUGUST 18, 2018 8:44 AM

I've yet to eat an edible that has even given me as much as a buzz. I've eaten them in California, Oregon, Washington from dispensaries and even those homemade. For me it's a joint, I guess I'm old school.

REPLY >

MEL on AUGUST 19, 2018 9:09 AM

Milo, same here. I've tried several brands of edibles from all over and nothing works for me. 10 mg is the average dose. I've tried 50 mg and still nothing! 🌟 I can't afford to eat \$10 I'm edibles every night!

REPLY >

HAMMY on AUGUST 18, 2018 2:30 PM

I'm trying to find a way for the cannabis to hit my brain receptors as I have a morphine pump that's implanted for Pain. I can't get high. Before the pump I would be able to get the effects however it's not possible now. Was hoping the edibles didn't have to go through same receptors.

REPLY >

SUNRISE on AUGUST 18, 2018 6:12 PM

Let us know if you get what you need out of an eatable. My brother has the same problem and is not wanting to try eating his dose. Like to try and encourage him if yours works.

REPLY >

MEL on AUGUST 19, 2018 9:07 AM

With being on morphine, you're probably not going to get any high effects from smoking or ingesting

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