

CBD AND HEMP: DISTINCTIONS WITH A DIFFERENCE

AVAILABLE SEEMINGLY EVERYWHERE, THEY AREN'T ALL THE SAME

Hemp and CBD are enjoying nationwide popularity. The passing of the 2018 Farm Bill has made growing hemp easier, and hemp-derived CBD is being sold legally in stores without a license. But what are they? How do they differ from cannabis and THC, which the federal government still considers illegal?

Hemp is a variation of the cannabis sativa plant. It is not considered marijuana because it contains only trace amounts of THC and produces no intoxication.

"Industrial Hemp is defined as cannabis containing less than 0.3 percent THC in the female flowers," said Lawrence Serbin, president of Hemp Traders, the nation's largest supplier of hemp fibers. Serbin explained that "Cannabis which has more than 0.3 percent THC in the female flowers is considered recreational cannabis or 'marijuana.'"

Historically grown in the United States to make rope, hemp is now used in manufacturing food, paper, textiles, lotions, plastics, fuels and CBD.

CBD, or cannabidiol, is a non-intoxicating component extracted from either hemp or cannabis. Although the drug Epidiolex, which contains cannabis-derived CBD, was approved as a Schedule V drug by the FDA in 2018 for seizure control, CBD remains an illegal Schedule I drug. Hemp-derived CBD, however, is readily available and legal.

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Danny Kress, Manager, A Therapeutic Alternative dispensary

CBD products made from cannabis are more powerful than those made from hemp, and more useful in medicine for issues such as pain, anxiety, sleeplessness and cancer-related side effects. While hemp-based CBD is pressed from seeds, cannabis-based CBD takes advantage of the whole plant.

"It's what I call 'the entourage effect,'" said Danny Kress, manager at A Therapeutic Alternative dispensary. "Within cannabis, there are 85 compounds, and this unique combination provides a better effect than any one cannabinoid by itself."

One of those compounds is THC. Added in trace amounts, like an 18-to-1 ratio, THC acts like a CBD super-charger, but without any risk of intoxication. Because cannabis dispensaries are licensed to sell THC, only they can offer



No dispensary needed. CBD products from Hella Glass head shop

these enhanced CBD products. Dispensaries typically stock CBD/THC ratios including 8-to-1, 4-to-1 and 1-to-1 combinations, "from less aggressive to more aggressive," Kress explained.

Likewise, CBD products sold in dispensaries are tested according to California's best-in-the-nation standards for potency, purity, heavy metals, molds and accurate labeling. Many CBD products one finds at grocery stores and head shops are manufactured outside the country and untested. For this reason, it is best to rely on the expertise of a dispensary and a well-informed budtender when choosing CBD products to try.



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