

## CDC Warns Pot Edibles Are Highly Dangerous

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CDC releases statement over a "potential danger" associated with marijuana edibles. © Photo courtesy of Shutterstock CDC releases statement over a "potential danger" associated with marijuana edibles.

Following the death of Levy Thamba — a 19-year-old student who jumped to his death from the fourth floor of his hotel in Denver after consuming marijuana edibles — the risks associated with so-called “pot brownies” have been thrust into the national spotlight. Now the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention wants the public to be fully aware of the “potential danger” that awaits anyone looking to enjoy smokeless marijuana.

Thamba, who had no history of alcohol abuse, drug use, or mental illness, obtained the marijuana cookie from a 23-year-old friend he had been visiting Colorado with. As directed by the sales clerk at the marijuana dispensary, Thamba only consumed a small piece of the cookie. However, he consumed the rest of the cookie after 30 to 60 minutes.

An ingredients list on the cookie read: "65 mg THC/6.5 servings (THC, tetrahydrocannabinol, the principal psychoactive agent in cannabis)." The label also stated: "This marijuana product has not been tested for contaminants or potency."

Thamba’s friends reported that he started to act hostile and speak erratically approximately two hours after eating the entire cookie. Three and a half hours after eating the first piece of the cookie, Thamba leaped to his death, becoming the first reported death associated with the consumption of marijuana edibles. Thamba’s autopsy listed “marijuana intoxication” as a chief contributing factor.

“This case illustrates a potential danger associated with recreational edible marijuana use,” the CDC said in a statement. “Some studies have suggested an association between cannabis and psychological disturbances. Second to alcohol, marijuana is the most commonly used recreational drug in the United States, with an estimated 19.8 million past-month users during 2013. In 2012, Colorado and Washington became the first states to permit recreational use of marijuana under their state laws.”

Although Thamba’s death is the first associated with marijuana edibles, it was most certainly not the last. Back in March, the family of Luke Goodman blamed the 23-year-old’s suicide on peach tart candies containing 10mg of THC per piece of candy. Goodman’s cousin, Caleb Fowler, said he began acting “pretty weird and relatively incoherent” a few hours after consuming five times the recommended dosage.

Goodman’s mother, Kim, said her son did not read the labels which stated: “The intoxicating effects of this product may be delayed by two or more hours. The standardized serving size for this product includes no more than 10mg.”

“It was 100 percent the drugs,” Kim Goodman told CBS Denver. “It was completely because of the drugs — he had consumed so much of it. It was completely out of character for Luke. There was no depression or anything that would leave us being concerned, nothing like that. I would love to see edibles taken off the market. I think edibles are so much more dangerous.”