

# Media Release



## Cannabis Edibles and Childhood Poisonings

August 21, 2024 – For Immediate Release

Timiskaming Health Unit (THU) is working in partnership with cannabis retailers across the district to remind people to keep their cannabis out of reach of children to help prevent unintended poisonings. Retailers will be distributing a limited number of lock bags and resources on how to store cannabis safely and out of reach of children. Edibles should be treated like any other dangerous household item.

Ingesting cannabis is the most common cause of cannabis poisoning in children. Edible cannabis products have a stronger effect on children because of their smaller body size. Children can develop difficulty breathing, agitation, drowsiness and coma from ingesting cannabis. These products are appealing to children because they resemble common treats such as candies, chocolates, cookies, or other baked goods and children can't tell the difference.

In recent years in Ontario and across Canada, there has been an increase in the number of children hospitalized due to cannabis related poisonings, most often these events happen at home.

"Legalizing cannabis was a move to help ensure a safe supply for those who consume" says Kim Peters, Public Health Promoter with Timiskaming Health Unit. "While there is a link between legalization and increased unintended childhood poisonings, we also know that some of the poisonings occur from non-regulated cannabis products."

"You take extra precautions to protect your children from harms by using baby gates, and household cleaners out of reach, you should treat cannabis the same. Kids can't tell the difference between cannabis edibles and regular treats", says Peters. THU recommends storing any edibles away from regular food and drink, and in a locked container. Talk to friends and family members who consume edibles to make sure that they are storing them properly.

Proper storage and education is a start, but stricter rules on packaging and the look and taste of edibles is needed to help reduce unintended childhood cannabis poisonings. For more information on cannabis please visit [www.timiskaminghu.com](http://www.timiskaminghu.com).

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