




Don't Get Scammed: CBD Oil or Snake Oil?

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Recently, my 87-year-old, Polish-Roman Catholic Grandmother and I discussed a new oil she was using. “Oh, Lizzie, who knew I would ever use a product like this but it works! Your uncle told us that people in California use it for pain so, Grandpa and I decided to try it. We feel like rebels.”

Whether you are for or against it, more people, like my Grandmother, are exploring CBD oil due to its wide variety of claims. In our area, the number of retailers selling CBD has exploded. Therefore, it is vital to understand CBD is a growing industry complete with unscrupulous scam-artists and businesses looking to get rich quick. This article is dedicated as a guide to help you determine what products are reliable or just “snake oil.”

Cannabidiol, or CBD, is an extract derived from cannabis plants. Although present in marijuana, CBD oil is usually extracted from agricultural hemp which contains less THC (tetrahydrocannabinol). This is the psychoactive chemical that gets you high and causes the munchies.

First Tip: High-quality manufacturers will clearly label how much THC is in their product. The optimal level of THC present should not exceed 0.3 percent.

The reason hemp plants are ideal is due to them being characterized as a “hyperaccumulator” or able to easily absorb anything present in the soil. It’s important to understand that one batch of CBD oil can be extracted from a mix of hundreds, even thousands, of hemp plants. Hence, quality products “will state on the label, full-spectrum or manufactured using the whole plant”. Unlike CBD isolates, whole plant CBD includes primary and secondary qualities in the hemp plant that make it more effective in the body.

Second tip: The highest-quality oils are extracted from either European or USA-grown organic hemp. In the US, farmers are required to get certified by the state’s department of agriculture.

Just as a source is important to quality, so is the extraction method. Ridiculously low priced CBD will have been processed with toxic solvents that are dangerous to the body. Plus, low cost equals low quality and a higher chance of containing THC. This is because the equipment needed to manufacture CBD properly is expensive. The highest quality and safest oil are extracted by either pharmaceutical-grade ethanol or CO2 extraction.

Third Tip: Know the extraction method and whether there are third-party laboratory results. Independent labs exist to ensure that the CBD oil on the market is everything it claims to be.

My Grandmother is fortunate to have access to someone knowledgeable in CBD, but not everyone does. Therefore, to avoid being scammed do not purchase CBD from businesses like video stores or gas stations. A trusted provider will understand how CBD works in the body, what conditions it may help, what to look for on the labels, and has successfully used the products with results.

Overall, if you retain anything from this article understand CBD oil is not a miracle cure. It's not a magic potion and beware of those who tout it as such. CBD should be used to promote general health similar to that of a daily supplement. What it will not do is cure chronic diseases or the common cold, take away all pain, rid you of depression or remove your debilitating condition. The sooner you understand this, the better your expectations of CBD oil will be and your chances of being scammed into buying "snake oil" will decrease.

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