

What are the risks?

Using khat has a number of different risks

Psychological:

- Mood swings
- Anxiety and depression
- Irritability
- Paranoia
- Dependency and addiction
- States of confusion
- Dependency and addiction
- Bouts of aggression
- Relapse of mental health conditions
- Problems with coordination

Physical:

- Weight loss/decreased appetite
- Insomnia
- High risk of dehydration
- Increased heart rate and palpitations
- Constipation
- Higher risk of heart attack
- Mouth cancer
- Liver disease
- Increased libido, which could lead to unsafe practices
- Interaction with prescribed medication such as antidepressants

Did you know?

Driving whilst under the influence of khat in the UK is an illegal offence.

Khat and the law

In 2014, khat became a class C drug which means it is illegal to have or to supply khat.

It is an offence to bring khat into the country, so if you've been abroad to a country where khat is legal you cannot bring it back to the UK with you.

If you are caught with khat you could be arrested and face up to two years in prison and/or get an unlimited fine.

Find out more

If you would like more information or support on khat or you are affected by someone else's use please contact us at Inclusion Recovery Hampshire.

Information is also available at:

NHS Website: www.nhs.uk

Talk to Frank Website: www.talktofrank.com

HOW TO CONTACT US

NORTH: 01782 639856
StarsNorth@mpft.nhs.uk

EAST: 01283 741053
StarsEast@mpft.nhs.uk

WEST: 01785 270080
StarsWest@mpft.nhs.uk

Or visit: www.staffstars.org

Khat What you need to know!



 STaRS

 @Staffs_TaRS

 www.staffstars.org

You. Me. Us

What is khat?

Khat is a green leafy plant.

- It contains two main stimulant drugs which speed up your mind and body.
- Their main effects are similar to, but less powerful than, amphetamine (Speed).
- Used mostly in North East Africa.

The myths

- Khat is legal to use
- As khat is a plant there are no risks to users

What is true is that khat is a class C drug in the UK and occasional use of khat has very low risks but like all drugs it can cause harm, especially when it is used several times a week.

How is khat taken?

Khat is often combined with tobacco and smoked in what's known as a 'joint' or a 'spliff'.

The leaves are chewed and held in the cheek and then spat out. The chemical in the plant leaf starts to break down after picking so users try to get it fresh.

It can be brewed in tea and swallowed.

The powder is usually snorted or injected.

When used or available in the 'dance' scene or clubs it is often in tablet form.

Khat is used in a crash binge pattern (use a lot, go into withdrawal then use more to stop the withdrawal symptoms) that lasts four to six hours.

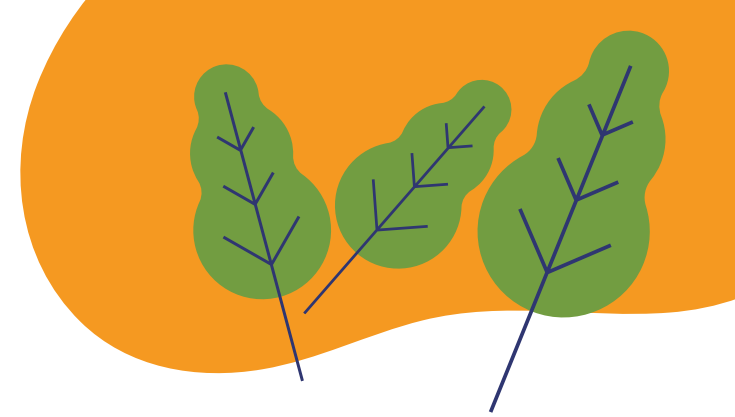
What does it look like?

Khat originally comes from the leafy green plant called *Catha Edulis*. Fresh khat looks like hedge trimmings and in the original form is a green/brown/yellow leaf.

It is often sold in small bundles wrapped in banana leaf.

Khat comes in two forms – the original (cathinone) and artificial form (methcathinone).

The artificial form is white powder.



What are the effects?

Khat is a stimulant and users can experience a range of effects;

- You feel more alert
- Talkative
- Euphoria – extreme happiness
- Suppress the appetite
- Impaired judgement and concentration
- 'Blissed out' sense of calm if chewed over a long time
- Rapid speech
- Restlessness
- Twitching
- Mood swings
- Increased energy
- Improved confidence