

FDA highlights associated risks of herbal medicine Kratom

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Kratom grows naturally in several Southeast Asian countries such as Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. It has been used for centuries by local farmers and populations as part of several herbal remedies.

It contains alkaloids mitragynine and 7-hydroxymitragynine that have similar effects as opioids but do not affect breathing of the individual. Exact actions of the compounds present in this plant is not known.

Several online websites and shops sell this product in the US claiming that kratom can cure several mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety and pain and also be used as a de-addiction agent.

The FDA statement emphasizes that kratom naturally has similar effects like narcotics and opioids. This means that regular usage of these products can lead to addiction and abuse problems. Severe over-dosage may also lead to death.

At present the FDA is taking steps to curb the use of kratom by preventing its shipments, conducting seizures, voluntary destruction of kratom containing products etc.