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Debunking Medical Myths: Kratom: Natural Healing Or Harmful?

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Kratom:

Natural Healing or Harmful?

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What is Kratom?



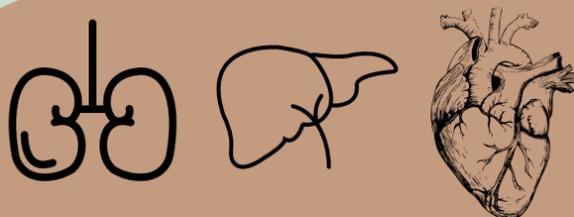
Kratom, a tropical tree native to Southeast Asia, has been traditionally used as a stimulant and has gained increasing popularity globally as a reported analgesic.

Its **leaves** are chewed fresh, or dried for preparation as a tea. Its adoption in Western countries has often taken a powdered or encapsulated form.

Kratom is marketed as an alternative to opioids and as an opioid-withdrawal medication. Its increasing popularity as such is a **rising public health concern**.

How does it work?

The identified active molecules in kratom are mitragynine and 7-OH-mitragynine (7-HMG), which **act primarily on opioid receptors** in the brain to produce their reported pain-relieving effects.



Potential Risks

Although some may use kratom because they think it is a safer alternative to opioids, research indicates that adverse effects to kratom **abuse** likely occur. There have been several cases that link high kratom doses to **organ toxicities** involving the kidneys, liver, heart, brain, etc. In some severe cases, it may even cause death.

But isn't it natural?

Plant-based **does not automatically mean safe**.

Kratom does not have **robust standards** for:

- **Dosing**
- **Quality**
- **Usage**

This lack of clarity informs the **significant risks** of kratom use.



Bottom line: Forego the leaf

The unregulated commerce of kratom in the United States and the lack of rigorous clinical studies present twinned challenges for patients and physicians. **Without public oversight for its quality, and a still-growing body of clinical research outside of case reports, kratom as it exists presently cannot be endorsed as a legitimate medicine.**

Please consult a physician if you are in need of treatment for Opioid Use Disorder, as there are accredited therapies available.

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