

## **KHAT –Enjoy Paranoid Delusions**

A relatively unheard of drug is quietly making its way into major cities of the US, smuggled in by individuals of Somali, Ethiopian, and Yemeni descent. Khat, *Catha Edulis*, is a flowering shrub native to East Africa and the Arabian-Peninsula. Khat refers to the leaves and young shoot of *Catha Edulis*. It has been widely used since the thirteenth century as a recreational drug by the indigenous people of East Africa, the Arabian Peninsula and throughout the Middle East.

### **Street Names For Khat:**

Abyssinian tea, African salad, bushman's tea, Chat, Gat, Kat, Miraa (in Kenya), Oat, Qat (in Yemen), Quat, Tohai, and Tschat (in Ethiopia).

There is no legitimate medical use for Khat in the United States. Khat contains two central nervous system (CNS) stimulants, namely cathinone and cathine. Khat produces amphetamine-like effects and addiction.

### **Effects Of Using KHAT:**

- Euphoria
- A feeling of increased alertness and energy
- Hyperactivity
- Anorexia
- Lack of fatigue
- Feeling relaxed
- Talkative
- Elevated blood pressure
- Dilated pupils
- Hyperthermia
- Arrhythmias
- Increased respiration

These amphetamine-like effects usually last between 90 minutes and 3 hours. After-effects have been reported as lack of concentration, numbness and insomnia.

The use and abuse of Khat leads to psychological dependence that often produces addiction. Reading the two lists that detail the effects of using this psychologically addictive drug should make any prudent person never get involved with it.

Besides creating behavioral changes and impairment of mental health, chronic use of Khat leaves the user with:

- Manic behavior with grandiose delusions
- Violence

- Suicidal depression
- Psychosis characterized by paranoid delusions
- Physical exhaustion
- Anorexia
- Periodontal disease
- Disturbances of the gastrointestinal system

Physical withdrawal symptoms have not been associated with discontinuation of Khat. But there's no telling how long the serious mental conditions produced by Khat use will remain.

Abuse of Khat in the United States is most prevalent among immigrants from Somalia, Ethiopia, and Yemen. Khat use and abuse is highest in cities with a substantial population of these immigrants and the rate of addiction is rising accordingly. These cities include Boston (MA), Columbus (OH), Dallas (TX), Detroit (MI), Kansas City (MO), Los Angeles, (CA) Minneapolis (MN), Nashville (TN), New York (NY), and Washington D.C.

According to the National Drug Intelligence Center, Somali and Yemen independent dealers are distributing Khat in Ann Arbor, Detroit, Lansing and Ypsilanti, Michigan; Columbus, Ohio; Kansas City, Missouri; and Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota. Due to a limited shelf life, the Khat needs to be transported quickly and directly to the intended market.

Abuse of Khat is not limited to those from Somalia, Yemen and Ethiopia. Americans have begun abusing Khat; however, the drug likely will not become widely popular due to its limited shelf life. Stimulant abusers commonly seek more intense physiological effects, such as those produced by cocaine and methamphetamine, but Khat can become a good substitute to those seeking to maintain their addiction to stimulants.

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**Pat Graham is the author of the eBook: *"Child Drug Addicts – Save Them While You Can"***  
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