

JSI RESEARCH & TRAINING INSTITUTE · VIRTUAL WORKSHOP

# Unregulated Intoxicants in New Hampshire

*Why young people use them, and what they do to the body and brain*

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# What you'll leave with

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1

## Recognize

Kratom/7-OH, nitrous oxide, amyl nitrite, mushroom products, blue lotus, and hemp-derived THC — by name, form, and where they're sold.

2

## Understand the pull

Identify the common features that make these substances attractive to adolescents and young adults.

3

## Know the harms

Describe the major acute and chronic health effects of each, including red flags for clinical recognition.

4

## Act on it in NH

Use a brief screen, talk to youth and families, and connect them to NH resources (The Doorway, 211).

# Where are these substances coming from?

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"Gas station drugs"

**Smoke shops,  
convenience stores,  
vape stores,  
social media.**

*Sold openly. Marketed as legal,  
natural, or "hemp-derived."*

## The regulatory gap

**Not FDA-approved drugs.**

Not regulated like cannabis or alcohol.

Not consistently scheduled by DEA.

Often marketed as "dietary supplements" or "hemp" — categories with weak oversight.

**Result:** potent psychoactive products sit next to gum and candy, with no age limit, no purity standards, and no dose information.

# Why these substances appeal to youth

## Perceived as legal & safe

Sold in stores, no carding, no "drug dealer" stigma. "If it were dangerous, they wouldn't sell it."

## Social media virality

TikTok trends (e.g., Galaxy Gas), micro-dosing influencers, "plant medicine" framing.

## Cleaner-feeling than "real" drugs

Framed as natural, herbal, or wellness — kratom for "focus," amanita for "sleep," THC-A as "hemp."

## Candy-like packaging

Fruit-flavored gummies, sodas, vapes, ice-cream cones. Bright colors, cartoon mascots, familiar shelves.

## Cheap & accessible

\$5-20 for a high. No need for a dealer, ID, or even a phone — just walk in.

## Detection & policy gaps

Don't show on standard urine drug screens. Not addressed by most school policies or parent conversations.

# Where things stand in NH (2026)

Substance	NH status / recent activity
Kratom (mitragynine)	Legal. No state age limit. SB 557 (2026) advancing: would limit 7-OH to <1,000 ppm and ban sales to <21.
7-OH concentrates	Sold in NH smoke shops. FDA recommended Schedule I action in 2025.
Hemp-derived THC (delta-8, delta-10, THCA)	Effectively banned for retail under RSA 439-A:4 (total-THC standard). Enforcement uneven; products still sold.
Adult-use cannabis	Not legal in NH (only state in New England without adult-use). Medical program only.
Nitrous oxide	No NH-specific recreational ban. FDA 2025 consumer warning re: "Galaxy Gas"-style products.
Amyl/alkyl nitrites ("poppers")	Sold as "video head cleaner" / "leather cleaner." Not FDA-approved for inhalation.
Amanita muscaria / muscimol gummies	Not DEA-scheduled. FDA (Dec 2024) declared not safe for use in food. NH has no state ban.
Blue lotus ( <i>Nymphaea caerulea</i> )	Not scheduled. Sold as tea / vape liquid. FDA: not approved for consumption.

Sources: NH RSA 439-A:4; NH SB 557 (2026); FDA consumer alerts 2024–2025.

# K

## SUBSTANCE 1 OF 6 · PRODUCT RECOGNITION

# Kratom & 7-OH — forms you'll see in NH

*What to look for in NH retail. Illustrations — not specific brands.*



### Powder pouch

Loose-leaf or capsule fill. Sold by the gram.



### Single-shot bottle

"K-shots," 15 mL. High concentrate.



### 7-OH tablets

Concentrated; more potent than morphine at mu.



### Ice-cream-cone tablet

Candy-shaped 7-OH; the signature 2025 form.

## K

SUBSTANCE 1 OF 6

# Kratom & 7-hydroxymitragynine (7-OH)

*Mitragyna speciosa* · "Kratom shots," 7-OH tabs/gummies, "OPMS Gold," "K-shot"

**Pharmacology:** Mitragynine: partial mu-opioid agonist +  $\alpha$ -2 / serotonergic activity. 7-OH: minor natural alkaloid (<2%) but MORE potent at mu-opioid receptor than morphine. Concentrates and "enhanced" products amplify 7-OH dramatically.

## Why young people use it

- Sold legally next to gum at gas stations and smoke shops.
- Marketed for energy, focus, anxiety, opioid withdrawal self-treatment.
- Fruit-flavored gummies, sodas, ice-cream-cone-shaped tablets.
- Influencer narratives: "natural alternative to pills."

## Health impacts

- Opioid-like effects: sedation, nausea, constipation, respiratory depression.
- Physical dependence and protracted withdrawal — esp. with 7-OH concentrates.
- Hepatotoxicity, seizures, QT changes; deaths reported.
- Polysubstance use: kratom + benzos/opioids/alcohol drives most fatalities.

## Clinical red flags

- Patient denies "drug use" but takes daily "focus shots" or "feel-good" capsules.
- Unexplained constipation, miosis, or precipitated withdrawal on naltrexone.
- Treats kratom as supplement — won't disclose unless asked by product name.
- Negative UDS despite clear opioid-toxidrome picture.



# Nitrous oxide — forms you'll see in NH

*What to look for in NH retail. Illustrations — not specific brands.*



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## Whip-it charger

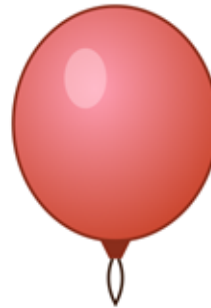
8 g cylinder. Originally culinary.



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## 1-lb flavored tank

Galaxy Gas-style. Strawberry, blueberry, cosmic.



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## Filled balloon

Inhalation vehicle. Look for empties at events.



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## Cracker dispenser

Hand-held device to discharge chargers.



SUBSTANCE 2 OF 6

# Nitrous oxide — "Whippits," "Galaxy Gas"

*N<sub>2</sub>O · Whip-its, hippie crack, nangs, Galaxy Gas, FastGas, Cosmic Gas*

**Pharmacology:** NMDA receptor antagonist with secondary effects on opioid and GABA systems. Acute: rapid euphoria, dissociation, laughter, paresthesias — lasting ~1–3 min. Inactivates vitamin B12 by oxidizing cobalt → functional B12 deficiency.

## Why young people use it

- Cheap, near-instant high; no smell, no UDS detection.
- Sold in 1-lb "culinary" canisters in flavored varieties — Galaxy Gas.
- TikTok virality and meme culture; "hippie crack" framing as harmless.
- Legal to buy, sold in smoke shops and online with no age check.

## Health impacts

- Subacute combined degeneration of the cord (B12-related myelopathy).
- Peripheral neuropathy, gait ataxia, cognitive impairment.
- Megaloblastic anemia, hyperhomocysteinemia → thrombotic events.
- Frostbite injuries (lips, face, airway) and hypoxic syncope/death.

## Clinical red flags

- Young patient with subacute paresthesias, gait instability, or leg weakness.
- MRI: T2 hyperintensity in dorsal columns ("inverted V" sign).
- Macrocytosis ± ↑MMA/homocysteine even with NORMAL serum B12.
- History of "whippits," cracker devices, balloons, or canisters in trash.

# Amyl & alkyl nitrites — forms you'll see in NH

*What to look for in NH retail. Illustrations — not specific brands.*



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## Small brown bottle

10 mL classic. "Rush," "Locker Room."



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## Larger "Jungle Juice"

30 mL bottles, brighter labels.



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## "Video head cleaner"

Mislabeled to evade FDA inhalation rules.



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## Retail display pack

Smoke-shop counter displays — 12-bottle case.



SUBSTANCE 3 OF 6

# Amyl & alkyl nitrites — "Poppers"

*Amyl, isobutyl, isopropyl nitrite · "Rush," "Jungle Juice" · sold as "video head cleaner"*

**Pharmacology:** Nitrite → nitric oxide → vasodilation + smooth-muscle relaxation. Brief head-rush, warmth, intensified sensation (~30–90 sec). Oxidizes hemoglobin  $Fe^{2+} \rightarrow Fe^{3+}$  (methemoglobin).

## Why young people use it

- Sold openly in adult/smoke shops labeled as cleaning products.
- Use long-rooted in MSM communities; growing curiosity-driven use in adolescents.
- Effects are brief and don't show on drug screens.
- Promoted online for sexual enhancement and dance-floor euphoria.

## Health impacts

- Severe methemoglobinemia — esp. with ingestion (vs. inhalation).
- Syncope, hypoxia, cardiovascular collapse.
- Fatal hypotension when combined with PDE5 inhibitors (sildenafil, tadalafil).
- Retinal toxicity ("poppers maculopathy") with chronic use.

## Clinical red flags

- Cyanosis NOT responsive to supplemental  $O_2$ ; "chocolate-brown" blood on draw.
- $SpO_2 \sim 85\%$  with normal  $PaO_2$  on ABG (saturation gap).
- Patient describes "head-rush" small bottles in nightclub or sexual context.
- Treat severe methHb with methylene blue 1–2 mg/kg IV.



# Mushroom products — forms you'll see in NH

*What to look for in NH retail. Illustrations — not specific brands.*



12 SQUARES - 100 mg AMANITA

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## Chocolate bar

12-square bars, amanita or undisclosed psilocybin.



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## Mushroom gummy

Cap-shaped, brightly colored.  
Candy-coded.



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## Soda / drink can

12 oz "psychedelic" drinks (e.g., Shroomz).



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## Powder packet

"Functional mushroom" single-serve sachets.



SUBSTANCE 4 OF 6

# Mushroom products — amanita & psilocybin-spiked

*Amanita muscaria (muscimol) · "Magic" gummies/chocolates · brands: TRĒ House, Diamond Shroomz (recalled)*

**Pharmacology:** Muscimol = GABA-A agonist (sedation, dreamlike states). Ibotenic acid = excitotoxic NMDA agonist (delirium, seizures). Many products spiked with un-disclosed psilocybin, 4-AcO-DMT, or kratom alkaloids.

## Why young people use it

- Marketed as "legal magic mushrooms," "microdose," "plant medicine."
- Sold as chocolates, gummies, sodas in colorful candy packaging.
- Wellness/psychedelic-renaissance framing.
- Cheap and legal — not federally scheduled.

## Health impacts

- Delirium, agitation, hallucinations; seizures; respiratory depression.
- Severe adverse events including ICU admissions and reported deaths.
- Hidden psilocybin = Schedule I exposure without patient knowledge.
- Diamond Shroomz outbreak (2024): >180 illnesses, multiple deaths.

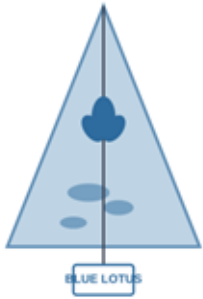
## Clinical red flags

- Atypical psychedelic toxidrome with prominent SEDATION or seizures.
- Patient names a wellness brand or "functional mushroom" gummy.
- Tox screens negative — confirmatory testing (LC-MS) detects muscimol/ibotenic acid.
- Call NH Poison Control (1-800-222-1222) and report to FDA MedWatch.

**B****SUBSTANCE 5 OF 6 · PRODUCT RECOGNITION**

# Blue lotus — forms you'll see in NH

*What to look for in NH retail. Illustrations — not specific brands.*



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## Pyramid tea bag

Sold in wellness shops, online.  
"Dream tea."



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## Vape cartridge

Blue lotus oil/extract, often  
blended.



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## Tincture / dropper

Alcohol-based extract; alkaloid  
content varies.



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## Dried flower / loose

Sold by the gram for smoking or  
steeping.



SUBSTANCE 5 OF 6

# Blue lotus — *Nymphaea caerulea*

*Egyptian blue lotus · "Blue lily," sold as tea, tincture, vape liquid*

**Pharmacology:** Apomorphine = dopamine receptor agonist (mild euphoria, sedation, nausea). Nuciferine = D2 antagonist + serotonergic activity (relaxation, mild hallucinogenic). Most online products contain little to no active alkaloid — but potency is unpredictable.

## Why young people use it

- Branded as ancient, sacred, Egyptian "dream-enhancer."
- Sold as tea, smokable, vape juice in wellness shops and online.
- TikTok and Reddit "dream work" / lucid-dreaming communities.
- No age restriction; perceived as harmless herbal product.

## Health impacts

- Sedation, dizziness, nausea, hallucinations at higher doses.
- Hypotension, tachycardia; potential serotonergic interactions.
- Marked product-to-product variability — true alkaloid content often low or absent.
- Risk of mislabeled, contaminated, or adulterated products.


## Clinical red flags

- Young patient using "sleep tea" or "dream vape" reporting vivid dreams or fugue states.
- Mild dopaminergic side effects (nausea, hypotension) without obvious cause.
- Often co-used with cannabis, kratom, or mushroom products.
- Document by product name — toxicology will not detect it.



# Hemp-derived THC — forms you'll see in NH


*What to look for in NH retail. Illustrations — not specific brands.*



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**Gummies / edibles**


Delta-8 or delta-9. Candy-coded packaging.



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**Disposable vape**


THCA carts; convert to delta-9 on heating.



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**Pre-roll / flower**

THCA flower sold as "hemp" — burns as cannabis.



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**Seltzer / drink**

5 mg cans. Sold openly at gas stations.



# Hemp-derived THC products

*Delta-8 THC · Delta-10 THC · THCA flower · HHC · THC-O · THCP*

**Pharmacology:** Delta-8/-10: CB1 partial agonists, ~50–75% the potency of delta-9 THC. THCA: non-psychoactive precursor that converts to delta-9 THC when heated (smoked/vaped). Most products are CBD chemically converted to THC isomers — synthesis byproducts present.

## Why young people use it

- Sold legally in NH gas stations and smoke shops despite RSA 439-A:4.
- Cheaper than dispensary cannabis; no medical card required.
- Gummy, vape, drink formats with bright packaging.
- Framed as "legal weed" or "hemp" — perceived as safer than "real" cannabis.

## Health impacts

- Severe intoxication — pediatric ED visits from candy-shaped gummies.
- Cannabis hyperemesis, panic, psychosis, cannabis use disorder.
- No purity standards: solvent residues, heavy metals, synthesis byproducts.
- Unknown long-term effects of novel cannabinoids (HHC, THC-O, THCP).

## Clinical red flags

- UDS positive for THC despite patient denying "weed" — they say "hemp" or "delta-8."
- Adolescent with cyclic vomiting, hot showers as the only relief (CHS).
- First-episode psychosis temporally linked to escalating vape use.
- Accidental pediatric ingestion of candy-shaped gummies — call poison control.

# Common threads across all six

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## Standard UDS will miss most of these

Kratom, 7-OH, nitrous, poppers, muscimol, blue lotus, novel cannabinoids — none on routine panels. Send LC-MS or specific assays when clinical suspicion is high.

## Polysubstance is the rule

Most ED presentations involve combinations: kratom + benzos, THC + alcohol, nitrous + cannabis. Always screen broadly once any one is identified.

## Poison control is your friend

1-800-222-1222 — single national number. Documents emerging products, confirms toxidromes, and contributes to FDA surveillance.

## Ask by product, not by drug class

"Have you tried any vapes, gummies, shots, or smoke-shop products?" gets disclosure that "do you use drugs?" never does.

## Believe the negative B12 — but check MMA

Functional B12 deficiency from nitrous can occur with normal serum B12. Always send methylmalonic acid + homocysteine when N<sub>2</sub>O is on the differential.

## Document by brand and product

"Galaxy Gas," "OPMS Gold," "TRĒ House" — brand names matter for public health surveillance and for the next clinician seeing the patient.

# Brief tools that work in any setting

## S2BI · Screening to Brief Intervention

*Best evidence for adolescents (ages 12–17).*

**In the past year, how many times have you used...**

tobacco, alcohol, cannabis, prescription meds (non-medical),  
illegal drugs, inhalants, herbals, and synthetics?

**Triage:**

Never → positive reinforcement

Once or twice → brief advice

Monthly → brief intervention

Weekly or more → refer to assessment

## CRAFTT 2.1+N

*For those who endorse any past-year use.*

**C** — Riding in a Car with someone (incl. yourself) who was high?

**R** — Used to Relax, fit in, or feel better?

**A** — Used while Alone?

**F** — Forget things you did while using?

**F** — Family or Friends told you to cut down?

**T** — Gotten into Trouble while using?

**2+ yes = high risk for SUD; refer for full assessment.**

# How to talk with youth and families

## With youth

- Confidentiality first — explain the limits before you ask anything.
- Open with curiosity, not interrogation: "What have you seen friends try?"
- Use brand and product names — not "drugs" or "substances."
- Validate the appeal before discussing harms: "I understand why it sounds OK."
- Motivational interviewing, not lectures. Roll with resistance.

## With families

- Educate without alarming: products are sold legally — that doesn't mean safe.
- Help families recognize forms: vape carts, gummies, canisters, small bottles.
- Frame conversations as ongoing, not one-time "the talk."
- Encourage walking smoke shops together — see what's on the shelf.
- Connect to The Doorway (211) early — don't wait for crisis.

# Where to send patients and families in NH

## The Doorway NH • Call 211

Single statewide entry point for substance use disorder treatment and recovery. 24/7, multilingual. Connects to evaluation, MAT, residential treatment, recovery housing. [thedorway.nh.gov](http://thedorway.nh.gov)

### NH Statewide Addiction Crisis Line

1-844-711-4357 (HELP) — 24/7 immediate support and triage.

### SAMHSA National Helpline

1-800-662-HELP (4357) — confidential, free, English/Spanish, 24/7.

### NH Center for Excellence on Addiction

[nhcenterforexcellence.org](http://nhcenterforexcellence.org) — training, data, TA for clinicians & community.

### Poison Control Center

1-800-222-1222 — for any product ingestion or toxidrome. National + state coordinated.

### 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

Co-occurring SUD + mental health crisis. Call or text 988.

### The Partnership @ Drug Free NH

[drugfreenh.org](http://drugfreenh.org) — youth-focused prevention resources and family guidance.