

Measured: What amount of cannabinoids is transferred into the hemp tea infusion?

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Hemp tea available in online shops often consists of leaves and flowers of fiber-type hemp. Various cannabinoids are contained in hemp teas. Due to its intoxicating (psychoactive) effect, the focus of the health risk assessment is on the cannabinoid Δ^9 -tetrahydrocannabinol (Δ^9 -THC). A team of researchers from the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) has investigated in 23 hemp tea varieties to which extent cannabinoids are transferred into the tea infusion as reported in the journal "Food Additives & Contaminants: Part A". Result: Until now, a 100 percent transfer of Δ^9 -THC from hemp tea into the tea infusion was assumed due to a lack of data. However, the investigations showed that on average only 0.5 percent of the Δ^9 -THC is transferred into the tea infusion.

Currently, the leaves and flowers of the hemp plant as well as their products are regulated by the Narcotics Act (BtMG) and therefore cannot be traded legally as food in Germany.

Link to the study: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/19440049.2023.2224455>

Based on these results, to exceed the acute reference dose (ARfD) of Δ^9 -THC (1 microgram Δ^9 -THC per kg body weight) for a 60-kilogram person due to hemp tea consumption, an average of 14 litres of hemp tea would have to be consumed per day. The ARfD indicates the estimated maximum amount of a substance that can be ingested with food in the course of a day without a recognisable health risk. However, for the hemp tea with the highest Δ^9 -THC content, already 0.9 litres would be sufficient to exceed the ARfD of Δ^9 -THC.

About the BfR

The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) is a scientifically independent institution within the portfolio of the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL). It advises the Federal Government and the federal states ("Laender") on questions of food, chemicals and product safety. The BfR conducts its own research on topics that are closely linked to its assessment tasks.

This text version is a translation of the original German text which is the only legally binding version.

Further information on the BfR website on the subject of hemp:

https://www.bfr.bund.de/de/fragen_und_antworten_zu_den_gesundheitlichen_risiken_von_hanfhaltigen_lebensmitteln_und_futtermitteln-277052.html



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