Kratom is not currently an illegal substance. Most people take kratom as a pill, capsule, or extract. Others chew kratom leaves or brew them as a tea. Sometimes the leaves are smoked or eaten in food. Health effects of kratom use include nausea, sweating, seizures, and psychotic symptoms. Some individuals have reported becoming addicted to kratom. Behavioral therapies and medications have not specifically been tested for treatment of kratom addiction.

What Are The Health Effects Of Kratom?

Reported health effects of kratom use include:

- Nausea
- Dry mouth
- Loss of appetite
- Itching
- Constipation
- Seizures
- Sweating
- Increased urination
- Hallucinations

Symptoms of psychosis have been reported in some people.
Can A Person Overdose On Kratom?

There have been multiple reports of deaths in individuals who had ingested kratom, but most have involved other substances. A 2019 paper analyzing data from the National Poison Data System found that between 2011 and 2017 there were 11 deaths associated with kratom exposure (Clinical Toxicology, 2019). Nine of the 11 deaths reported in this study involved kratom plus other drugs and medicines, such as diphenhydramine (an antihistamine), alcohol, caffeine, benzodiazipines, fentanyl, and cocaine. Two deaths were reported following exposure to kratom alone with no other reported substances. In 2017, the FDA identified at least 44 deaths related to kratom, with at least one case investigated as a possible use of pure kratom. The FDA reports state that many of the kratom-associated deaths appeared to have resulted from adulterated products or taking kratom with other potent substances, including illicit drugs, opioids, benzodiazepines, alcohol, gabapentin, and over-the-counter medications, such as cough syrup. Also, there have been some reports of kratom packaged as dietary supplements or dietary ingredients that were laced with other compounds that caused deaths. People should check with their health care providers about the safety of mixing kratom with other medicines.

Is Kratom Addictive?

Like other drugs with opioid-like effects, kratom might cause dependence, which means individuals will feel physical withdrawal symptoms when they stop taking the drug. Some people have reported becoming addicted to kratom. Withdrawal symptoms include:

- Muscle aches
- Insomnia
- Irritability
- Hostility
- Aggression
- Emotional changes
- Runny nose
- Jerky movements

How Is Kratom Addiction Treated?

There are no specific medical treatments for kratom addiction. Some people seeking treatment have found behavioral therapy to be helpful. Additional research is needed to determine how effective this treatment option is. An individual who is addicted to kratom should speak with their doctor or other health care professional to talk about behavioral therapy options and other support services (e.g., 12 step groups) that may be helpful.

Does Kratom Have Value As A Medicine?

In recent years, some people have used kratom as an herbal alternative to medical treatment in an attempt to control withdrawal symptoms and cravings caused by addiction to opioids or to other addictive substances such as alcohol. There is no scientific evidence that kratom is effective or safe for this purpose; further research is needed.