

KRATOM CAN BE ABUSED AND CONTRIBUTE TO DEATH EVEN IF IT IS NOT THE ONLY SUBSTANCE INVOLVED.

KRATOM ABUSE DOES NOT REQUIRE A SINGLE CAUSE OF DEATH



Focusing only on “sole cause of death” ignores how drug-related harm is actually measured and can underestimate real public health risk.

WHAT “DRUG ABUSE” MEANS

- Use of a substance in a way that leads to harm or risk
- Includes misuse, dependence, and non-medical use
- Defined by effects on health and behavior—not just cause of death

HOW KRATOM DEATHS ARE EVALUATED

- Deaths often involve multiple substances
- Medical examiners report all contributing substances
- A drug can contribute to death without being the sole cause

WHY “SOLE CAUSE” IS THE WRONG STANDARD

- Most overdose deaths involve polysubstance use
- Public health systems track presence and contribution, not exclusivity
- Requiring a single cause would exclude most drug-related deaths

Kratom harm is measured by contribution—not exclusivity.

Based on federal public health definitions of substance use and overdose reporting.

Sources

- National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) — Substance Use and Addiction Definitions
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) — Overdose Surveillance (SUDORS)
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) — Adverse Event Reporting System (FAERS)

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