



NEW KRATOM SCIENCE STUDY AT ODDS WITH FDA CLAIM THAT KRATOM IS A NARCOTIC-LIKE OPIOID

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – June 17, 2018—The American Kratom Association applauds the landmark science study published in the *Addiction Biology* journal that concluded that mitragynine “does not have abuse potential and reduces morphine intake, desired characteristics of candidate pharmacotherapies for opiate addiction and withdrawal...” This directly contradicts the FDA claims on kratom having the same effects of a classic opioid.

The study, co-authored by Christopher R. McCurdy, Scott E. Hemby, Scot McIntosh, Francisco Leon, and Stephen J. Cutler, isolated the potential high abuse of 7-hydroxymitragynine (7-HMG) when it is “adulterated or concentrated in commercially available kratom products, but noted that 7-HMG constitutes only 2 percent of the alkaloid content of kratom.”

The study can be found in the June 27, 2018 issue of *Addiction Biology*.

Dr. Jack Henningfield—one of the world’s leading experts on addiction and the behavioral, cognitive, and central nervous system (CNS) effects of drugs—highlighted the importance of this landmark study that challenges the FDA claims.

“This is an important study that addresses the addictive potential of kratom using the most well-accepted and relied upon animal model. It shows that the major naturally occurring constituent responsible for the health-related effects of kratom, mitragynine, is of low abuse potential.

A second substance, 7-hydroxymitragynine, that naturally occurs at such low levels in kratom that it might be of minimal health consequence, has higher abuse potential. This has at least two regulatory implications: (1) the finding does not support FDA’s claim that kratom is a narcotic-like opioid, and (2) in regulating kratom products, the FDA could set standards to ensure that no kratom product contain levels of 7-hydroxymitragynine exceeding those that are commonly present in kratom leaves and products.

The study also showed that mitragynine treatment reduced morphine self-administration, an effect consistent with the self-reported use of kratom to reduce opioid craving and use, and is consistent with the conclusion that mitragynine is the predominant active constituent in kratom.”

Dave Herman, Chairman of the American Kratom Association, called upon newly-appointed Acting Drug Enforcement Administrator Uttom Dhillon to return the FDA recommendation for scheduling of kratom back to the FDA for additional evaluation and research. “This new study confirms the growing body of evidence that the FDA has demonized kratom unfairly, and the time has come to allow the science to speak, not a bias against natural plants and herbs,” Herman concluded.