

New labs sprouting up to test cannabis—and the law

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Granddaddy Purple, Blueberry Yum Yum and other pot products may now be legal for medical use in 20 states and the District of Columbia, but how do patients know what dose they're really getting and whether it's safe? Small labs are setting up shop—some at their own legal peril—to help patients find out, according to an article in *Chemical & Engineering News*, the weekly newsmagazine of the American Chemical Society.

Bethany Halford, senior editor at C&EN, explains that consumers expect tight quality control over more traditional pharmaceuticals that come in syrups, drops and pill form at the corner pharmacy. Dosage should be precise, and purity is demanded. Now that the use of medical marijuana—and in Colorado and Washington, the buying of recreational pot—is growing legally, labs to analyze the available products are cropping up.

The labs test for the potency of marijuana not only by analyzing the plant itself, but also edible products such as taffy, caramel and gum that contain the drug. They also look for mold, mildew and microbial contamination, as well as the presence of pesticides and solvents left behind during production. The article notes that these entrepreneurial chemists, while helping [patients](#), are taking big risks and treading into untested legal territory. Although some [states](#) have legalized the purchase of the drug, possession of marijuana is still illegal under federal law.

More information: "Analyzing Cannabis"

cen.acs.org/articles/91/i49/Ch...-Safety-Potency.html

Provided by American Chemical Society

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