



Situation Overview

Kratom (*Mitragyna speciosa*) pronounced KRAT-om (like atom) is a Southeast Asian plant sold legally in most U.S. states at gas stations, smoke shops, and online. Its main alkaloid is mitragynine and is widely used for pain, anxiety, and self-treatment of opioid use disorder (OUD). 7-OH is the metabolite that makes kratom's risks higher. Patients frequently do not disclose use because it is available over the counter, so it is important to ask directly if patients are using kratom or 7-OH products.

7-OH is effectively a potent novel opioid. It is now being sold in a concentrated, semisynthetic form. In July 2025, the FDA recommended that the DEA classify concentrated 7-OH as a Schedule I controlled substance and that DEA rulemaking is still pending. Some states have already enacted state-level scheduling (AL, AR, CT, IN, LA, VT, WI) as of May 2026.

Poison control data (MMWR, March 2026): Kratom-related reports surged 1,231% from 2015 to 2025. The large increase in 2025 coincides with the emergence of 7-OH products, with a 1,200% increase in exposures resulting in adverse events and hospitalizations over the same period.

Pharmacology

- Mitragynine: partial mu-opioid agonist (approx. 25% morphine potency)
- 7-OH: approx. 10× more potent than morphine at mu-opioid receptors; also has alpha-2, kappa-opioid, and delta-opioid activity
- Cross-tolerance with morphine has been demonstrated

Critical Clinical Point:

- Administer naloxone for overdose. Overdose risk is significant with 7-OH products, which may cause respiratory depression comparable to or exceeding morphine compounds
- Kratom/7-OH: use is often undisclosed; opioid-pattern withdrawal : Ask directly; buprenorphine covers opioid withdrawal axis

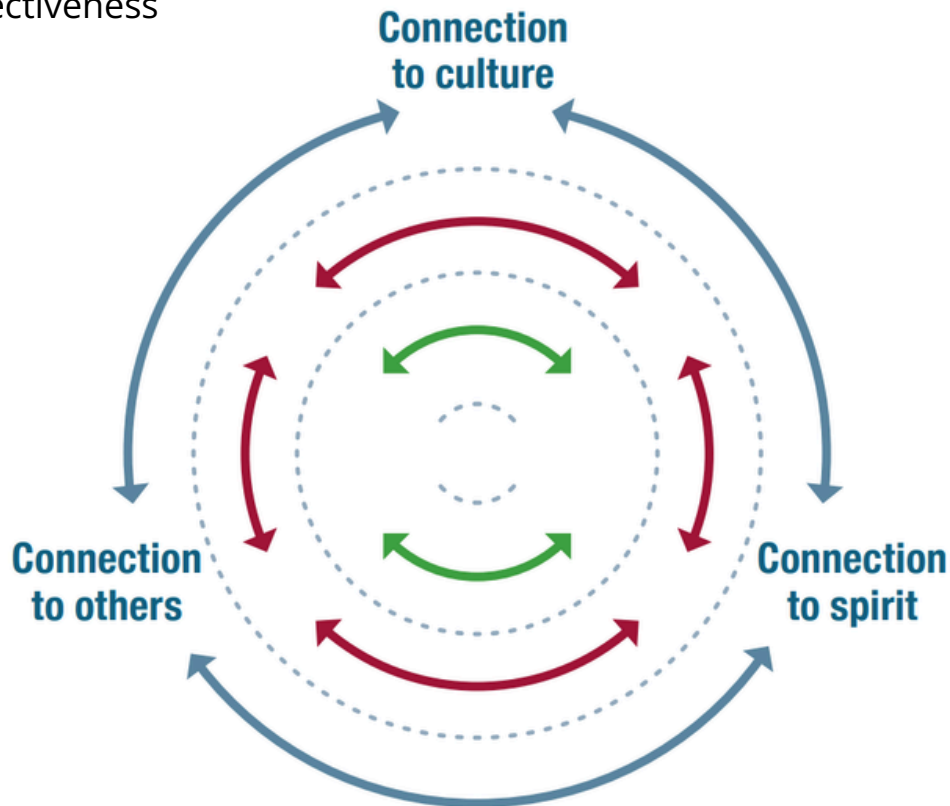


Withdrawal Management:

- Mirrors opioid withdrawal — can be assessed with COWS
- Symptoms: muscle aches, GI distress, anxiety, insomnia, dysphoria
- Typically more protracted and less intense than prescription opioid withdrawal

Withdrawal can be managed with Buprenorphine-Naloxone:

- Treat similar to opioid withdrawal; multiple case reports support buprenorphine-naloxone effectiveness



Engagement at Any Step in the Journey

Additional Resources

- IHS Buprenorphine Resources: <https://www.ihs.gov/opioids/>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/75/wr/mm7511a1.htm>
- <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/public-health-focus/fda-and-kratom>
- https://www.dea.gov/sites/default/files/2020-06/Kratom-2020_0.pdf
- <https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/-/media/Project/Websites/mdhhs/Keeping-Michigan-Healthy/Public-Health-Admin/Bulletins/Provider-Bulletin-on-7-OH-Enhanced-Kratom-Products---32326.pdf>

Patient information:

<https://www.fda.gov/media/187913/download?attachment>