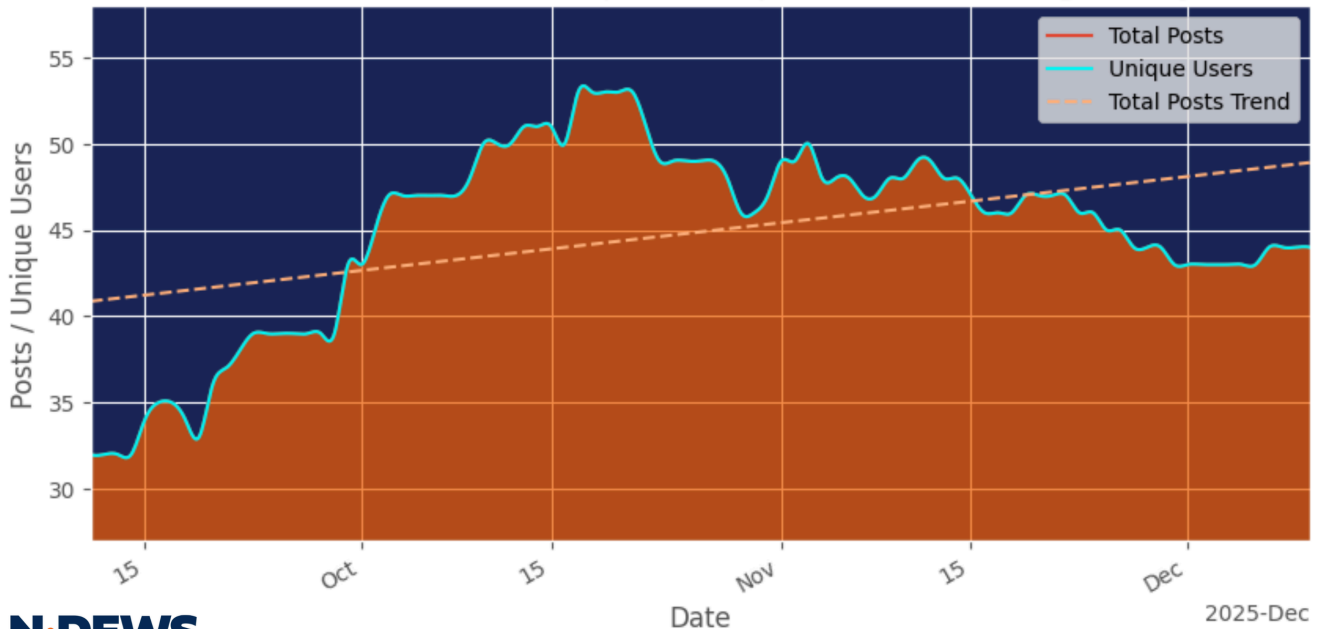


Alert from the NDEWS Web Monitoring Team Reddit mentions of *Amanita muscaria*

Sum of *Amanita Muscaria* Reddit posts/unique users in a rolling 90-day window



Why are we reporting on this? *Amanita muscaria* mushrooms are a topic of ongoing discussion regarding their presence in the US market and their reported effects among commenters. While traditionally recognized for their iconic red-and-white appearance, these mushrooms are increasingly marketed in commercial forms—such as gummies, tablets, and tinctures—available at gas stations, smoke shops, and online retailers. Reddit discussions highlight a growing trend of using these products as alternatives to psilocybin or alcohol, alongside significant concerns regarding inconsistent potency, mislabeling, and the lack of regulatory oversight for products sold in retail environments.

What is Amanita Muscaria? *Amanita muscaria* is a psychoactive mushroom containing the primary active compounds muscimol and ibotenic acid. Unlike "magic mushrooms" that contain psilocybin, *Amanita muscaria* acts primarily on the GABA and glutamate systems. It is widely available in dried cap form or as processed commercial products including gummies, chocolates, and extracts.

Public Health Impacts: Reddit discussants report a range of physical and psychological effects, frequently noting that the experience is unpredictable and highly dependent on the "preparation" of the mushroom. In these discussions, preparation refers to decarboxylation—a process where commenters apply heat and acidic liquids (such as lemon juice or vinegar) to convert ibotenic acid into muscimol. Multiple commenters suggest that improper preparation, such as consuming raw or under-processed caps, increases the presence of ibotenic acid, which they associate with "agitated" states, "thought loops," and severe nausea. Conversely, even with preparation intended to maximize muscimol, discussants describe "extreme sedation" that can lead to blackouts or periods of amnesia. Several commenters describe a state of disorientation where they lose the ability to distinguish between reality and a "dream-like" state, leading to reports of accidental self-injury or dangerous behaviors, such as attempting to exit windows. Furthermore, multiple discussants report lingering effects following the use of *Amanita* products, including "nightmarish" dreams, depersonalization, and sensory changes consistent with hallucinogen persisting perception disorder (HPPD), such as visual after-images or "stop-motion" perception.

How is it Being Discussed? Reddit commenters believe that *Amanita muscaria* occupies a unique category between a sedative-hypnotic and a dissociative, often comparing high-dose effects to a "dreamlike" or "delirious" state. There is frequent discussion regarding the "decarb" process—the chemical conversion of ibotenic acid to muscimol via heat and acid—which commenters believe is necessary to reduce toxicity and nausea. Many discussants express frustration with "gas station gummies," claiming they are often mislabeled, under-dosed, or potentially adulterated with research chemicals or other substances. The mushroom is frequently discussed as a tool for microdosing to manage anxiety, depression, or withdrawal from pharmaceutical medications like benzodiazepines and gabapentinoids. Additionally, *Amanita muscaria* is often mentioned in "stacking" protocols, where discussants combine it with psilocybin, LSD, or cannabis to alter or enhance the effects of those substances.