

CANNABIS AND THC PRODUCTS

FACTS FOR ADULTS OVER 21



WHAT IS CANNABIS?

Cannabis is a species of plant. The words “cannabis” and “marijuana” don’t mean the exact same thing.

- ▶ **Cannabis** refers to all products derived from the *Cannabis sativa* plant.
- ▶ **Marijuana** refers to cannabis products that contain high amounts of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC).
- ▶ **THC** is a natural compound found in cannabis that causes a “high.” Delta-8, Delta-9, and Delta-10 are forms of THC. Delta-9 is the most potent form.
- ▶ **CBD** is another natural compound found in cannabis. CBD does not cause a “high.”
- ▶ **Hemp** is a part of cannabis that has lower THC levels than marijuana.

This fact sheet follows the Minnesota Department of Health in using the term “cannabis” instead of “marijuana” as the word “marijuana” came into usage in the U.S. to leverage anti-immigrant sentiments.¹

SHORT-TERM EFFECTS ON THE BODY

Everyone’s body reacts to cannabis differently. Weight, metabolism, gender, and eating habits can affect how quickly it is absorbed into the body.

Effects may include:

- ▶ Relaxed or “high” feeling
- ▶ Racing heart
- ▶ Slower reactions or slurred speech
- ▶ Trouble thinking, concentrating, or remembering
- ▶ Temporary confusion, anxiety, panic, or paranoia

HOW IS CANNABIS USED?

Cannabis is often smoked, vaped, dabbed (inhaling vaporized cannabis concentrate), or taken as edibles. Vaping and dabbing involve high THC concentrations. Smoking is the fastest way to feel the effects of cannabis.

EDIBLES

Edibles are food and drink products that contain THC and can cause intoxication and impairment. The THC can come naturally from the cannabis plant, or it can be created from CBD.

Edibles come in many forms, including:

- ▶ Gummy candies
- ▶ Baked goods (cookies/brownies)
- ▶ Chocolates
- ▶ Beverages (soda/juice)



It takes longer to feel the effects of THC after taking edibles than after smoking or vaping cannabis.

Some EFFECTS may:



Take up to 2 hours to KICK-IN

and LAST up to 10 hours



Be mindful of the amount of THC in a serving and remember it may take over an hour to feel effects. Taking multiple servings of edibles in a short period of time increases the risk of poisoning.

CANNABIS CAN BE ADDICTIVE

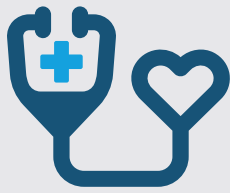
Research shows that:

- ▶ Today’s cannabis products have much more THC than products from a few decades ago.²
- ▶ 1 in 10 adults who use the drug can become addicted.³
- ▶ People who start using cannabis before the age of 18, or who use cannabis often, are more likely to develop cannabis use disorder.²

More research is needed to understand the long-term and permanent health effects of cannabis use.



An August 2024 study found that adults with cannabis use disorder were more likely to develop head and neck cancer than those who did not use the drug.⁴



MEDICAL CANNABIS

Minnesota legalized the use of medical cannabis in 2014. Cannabis use may help with certain medical conditions.

For more information, visit www.mn.gov/ocm/dmc.

HEALTH CONCERNS

- ▶ **Cannabis use can worsen mental health conditions.** If used often, and at higher potencies, cannabis may increase the risk of depression, anxiety, mental health emergencies, paranoia, and psychosis for those at risk of mental illness.³
- ▶ **Research is limited on interactions between cannabis and other medications or substances.** Talk to your doctor or pharmacist before using cannabis.
- ▶ **Cannabis can affect pregnancies and breastfeeding.** Cannabis use during pregnancy may cause lower birth weight, premature birth, stillbirth, and problems with brain development later in life. THC can pass from parent to baby through breastmilk. Secondhand cannabis smoke can irritate a baby's lungs.³

WHAT'S LEGAL IN MINNESOTA?

Minnesota legalized edibles with small amounts of hemp-derived THC in 2022 and legalized adult-use cannabis in 2023. Minnesotans over the age of 21 can now possess, transport, grow, and use cannabis products as long as they follow the possession limits and usage guidelines set in state law.

Cannabis is still federally illegal. The Office of Cannabis Management recommends people in Minnesota who are not U.S. citizens seek legal advice before using or possessing cannabis.⁵

Learn more at: www.mn.gov/ocm/consumers/adult-use

SAFE AND RESPONSIBLE USE

- ▶ **Driving while impaired is illegal.** Do not drive, bike, ski, snowboard, or operate machinery after using cannabis. Doing so can lead to a driving while impaired (DWI) charge.
- ▶ **Safe storage is important.** Store cannabis products in their original packaging in a secure, locked place. Keep them separate from food and safely out of reach of children and pets.
- ▶ **Secondhand smoke is deadly.** There is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. It is illegal to smoke or vape cannabis where minors could inhale the smoke or aerosol.
- ▶ **Help is available.** If you are concerned about your use or someone else's use, seek help from your doctor. No medications are currently available to treat a cannabis use disorder, but counseling and therapy can help.

Watch for accidental poisoning from cannabis products. Signs could include extreme confusion or anxiety, paranoia, panic, fast heart rate, increased blood pressure, hallucinations, severe nausea, vomiting, or unresponsiveness.



If a child ingests a cannabis product like an edible, call the Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222, regardless if symptoms are present. If the child stops breathing, collapses, or has a seizure, call 911.

RESOURCES:

Search "cannabis" on these websites:

- ▶ samhsa.gov
- ▶ cdc.gov
- ▶ health.state.mn.us
- ▶ mayoclinic.org
- ▶ nida.nih.gov
- ▶ mn.gov/ocm

¹ Cannabis and your Health, Minnesota Department of Health, 10/9/2024, <https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/cannabis/yourhealth.html>

² Understanding Your Risk for Cannabis Use Disorder, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 12/5/2024, <https://www.cdc.gov/cannabis/health-effects/cannabis-use-disorder.html>

³ Learn about Marijuana Risks, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 7/29/2024, <https://www.samhsa.gov/marijuana>

⁴ Cannabis Use and Head and Neck Cancer, JAMA Network, 8/8/2024, https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamaotolaryngology/article-abstract/2822269#google_vignette

⁵ Adult-Use Cannabis, Minnesota Office of Cannabis Management, <https://mn.gov/ocm/consumers/adult-use/>