

Safer use of cannabis

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Cannabis is a plant that contains a chemical called tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). THC is intoxicating or what is often referred to as a “high.” Cannabis can be smoked, vaped, or consumed as edibles. Adult-use cannabis is often referred to as recreational cannabis or marijuana. Edibles are products made with cannabis that you can eat or drink. Edibles often resemble food products such as cookies, chocolate, gummy candy, and beverages. THC in some edible products can be extracted from hemp.

Cannabis in Minnesota

In 2022, Minnesota legalized the recreational sale of lower-potency hemp-derived edible cannabis products (beverages, gummies etc.) to adults 21 years or older. These products are derived from hemp and contain THC.

Minnesota law allows only two forms of THC to be sold in hemp-derived products, Delta-8, and Delta-9 THC. Products that contain any synthetic or artificially derived cannabinoids (THCP, THC-O, HHC, Spice, K2) are not allowed. These products may be found in stores where people under 21 years old are allowed.

In 2023, Minnesota legalized adult-use cannabis for adults 21 and older. The sale of adult-use cannabis products (flower, concentrate, artificial cannabinoids, paraphernalia) will begin in 2025. However, some Tribes have already opened adult-use cannabis dispensaries. These products are different than lower potency hemp edibles and will only be sold in licensed cannabis dispensaries.

Quick Facts



Mental Health

Cannabis use has been linked to mental health conditions. People who use cannabis can develop psychosis.



Addiction

Some people who use cannabis may become addicted, meaning they cannot stop using cannabis.



Pregnancy

Using cannabis during pregnancy can affect a fetus's development and increase the risk of pregnancy complications.



Brain Health

Consuming cannabis has short and long-term effects on the brain. It can affect brain development in youth.



Alcohol and Cannabis

Using alcohol with cannabis can increase the effects of THC. This can cause greater health risks.



Driving

Driving under the influence of cannabis is illegal. It increases the risk of an accident.

How to use cannabis more safely

Cannabis affects people differently, based on body type and history with use. Research shows the tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) in cannabis can harm the developing brain and cause problems even after use ends. For this reason, it is not recommended that youth or adolescents use cannabis until age 25 or older when the brain is fully mature. Edibles affect the body differently than smoking or vaping. Here are some things to consider before using cannabis:

- **Understand the health risks.** Know the potential health risks before using cannabis. See the quick facts to learn more about health risks.
- **Understand the available products and differences.** Hemp-derived edibles are available as edible products (gummies, baked goods) and as beverages. THC is present both adult-use cannabis and in hemp-derived products.
- **Start with a small dose.** Understand how much THC is in the edible before eating it. Start with small amounts, (2.5 mg of THC or less). Edibles can take anywhere from 30 minutes to four hours to take effect. The intoxicating or “high” effect from an edible can last longer (up to 24 hours) than when smoked or vaped.
- **Wait at least two hours before taking another dose.** Waiting helps avoid over consumption and may limit possible negative side effects (e.g., anxiety, paranoia, hallucinations, and increased heart rate).
- **Store products safely.** Unintentional ingestion of cannabis is a risk for children and pets. Storing your edibles in an airtight, locked place helps reduce this risk.
- **Know the signs of THC overdose and poisoning.** Excessive sleepiness, nausea/vomiting and slurred speech are symptoms and signs of an overdose.

If you suspect a TCH overdose, contact Poison Control immediately.



1-800-222-1222
mnpoison.org

For questions or references

Contact publichealth@hennepin.us

Note: information provided in this factsheet does not address concerns for patients prescribed medical cannabis for specific health conditions. This factsheet should not replace medical advice.