

# Medical Cannabis

## Adverse drug reactions, drug interactions, and safety

While medical cannabis is generally safe and well-tolerated, patients and providers should be aware of several common side effects and safety issues.

### 1. Common side effects

- Dizziness, lightheadedness, dry mouth, sleepiness, anxiety, heart palpitations, hallucinations, and paranoia are common side effects. Be careful combining other medications that cause drowsiness with cannabis

### 2. Who shouldn't use medical cannabis?

- Patients who are pregnant, breastfeeding, have unstable heart conditions, or have a history of psychosis/schizophrenia should not use cannabis

### 3. Cardiovascular risk

- Cannabis use, especially smoking cannabis, may be associated with increased risk of stroke and heart attack

### 4. Drug interactions

- THC and CBD may interact with many drugs. Use a [drug interaction tool](#) and talk with your doctor/pharmacist to evaluate potential interactions

### 5. Driving safety

- Cannabis use impairs driving ability. Patients should not drive for at least 8 hours after using cannabis

### 6. Cannabis withdrawal

- Rapidly stopping cannabis use may cause unwanted, but not dangerous effects such as trouble sleeping, irritability, headache, and anxiety

### 7. Cannabis use disorder

- Approximately 10% of adults and even higher numbers of adolescents may develop cannabis use disorder - using cannabis despite it causing problems

### 8. Cannabinoid hyperemesis syndrome

- Regular use of high doses of cannabis may cause severe nausea, vomiting, and stomach pain. Stopping cannabis use is the only effective treatment

### 9. Safe medication storage

- Patients should store medical cannabis, especially edible products, in the original container up and away from other food products and out of reach of children

### 10. Underage cannabis use

- Children and teenagers should not use cannabis (unless given a compassionate use card), as it may cause greater rates of depression and anxiety, negatively affect brain development, and increase risk of addiction

## Resources & More Information

- [Cannabis \(Marijuana\) DrugFacts | National Institute on Drug Abuse \(NIDA\)](#)
- [Cannabis Health Effects | Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#)
- [Cannabis & Teens | Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#)

## Scientific Literature

- **Drug interactions**
  - [Delta-9-Tetrahydrocannabinol and Cannabidiol Drug-Drug Interactions](#)
- **Cardiovascular risk**
  - [Association of Cannabis Use with Cardiovascular Outcomes Among US Adults](#)
- **Driving safety**
  - [The effects of cannabis and alcohol on driving performance and driver behaviour: a systematic review and meta-analysis](#)
- **Underage cannabis use**
  - [Cannabis use and mental health in young people: cohort study](#)
  - [The CannTeen Study: Cannabis use disorder, depression, anxiety, and psychotic-like symptoms in adolescent and adult cannabis users and age-matched controls](#)