

Cannabis Harm Reduction Tips

Brought to you by the OCS in partnership with the Canadian Consortium for the Investigation of Cannabinoids (CCIC), a federally registered non-profit organization that comprises researchers, healthcare practitioners and educators.

TIP: LEARN ABOUT NON-ABSTINENCE OPTIONS

Harm Reduction

Harm reduction is a nonjudgmental approach to education and support for substance use.

Practise harm reduction by trying to make better-informed choices about cannabis use.

For more information,
scan the QR code or visit
CannabisMadeClear.ca



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TIP: LEARN HOW TO LIMIT EXPOSURE WHEN SMOKING CANNABIS

Environmental Smoke

Cannabis smoke can linger in the air and on furniture, floors and indoor walls. Try to take it outside whenever you can or to well-ventilated spaces, and avoid smoking around people with respiratory challenges.

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TIP: REDUCE RISKS WHEN SHARING CANNABIS

Safer Sharing

When sharing joints, bongos, pipes or vaporizers, you may also be sharing germs or viruses with others. Stay safer by using a mouthpiece or cover that you can clean.

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TIP: IDENTIFY RISKS UNIQUE TO OLDER ADULTS

Older Adults

If you are over 60, be aware that the effects of cannabis can last longer because of a slowing metabolism. Also, check with a pharmacist about potential complications with your medications.

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TIP: LEARN HOW CANNABIS ACTS IN THE BRAIN

Cannabis and the Brain

Using cannabis activates your brain's cannabinoid receptors, changing the way brain cells communicate with one another. It also mimics naturally occurring compounds in the brain called endocannabinoids. These compounds influence actions like hunger, pain and stress.

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TIP: IDENTIFY THE SIGNS OF DEPENDENCE

Recognizing Dependence

It's important to keep tabs on changing use. Need cannabis to get through the day or are there certain activities you can't do without it? Experience negative effects when you don't use it or tried to cut down or quit but can't? It might be time to change how and when you use cannabis.

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TIP: LEARN HOW CANNABIS CAN BE USED FOR COPING AND RELAXATION

Mental Health

Many people feel cannabis helps them with anxiety and depression, though sometimes cannabis with high amounts of THC can worsen mental health symptoms. It's important to monitor your cannabis use and how it makes you feel.

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TIP: LEARN HOW TO IDENTIFY TOLERANCE TO CANNABIS

Tolerance

If you're using cannabis on a regular basis, you may find that you're becoming "tolerant" to its effects. Pay attention to signs such as needing more or stronger cannabis products to get the desired effects.

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TIP: BE AWARE OF STIGMAS CONNECTED TO CANNABIS

Conversations with Healthcare Providers

Fear of judgment might make you uncomfortable speaking to your healthcare provider about cannabis. If you have questions about cannabis, consider seeking a provider to better support and guide you.

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TIP: LEARN ABOUT COMMON ADVERSE REACTIONS

Adverse Reactions

Cannabis hyperemesis syndrome is a condition involving severe vomiting that does not stop. This rare condition can happen even if you use cannabis regularly. Taking an anti-nausea medication, a hot shower and rest may help. Seeking medical care may also be required.

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