

Things you should know about **cannabis**

Providing you with information to make your own decisions

27%

of Canadians aged 15 to 24 have used cannabis in the past 3 months



You have the choice whether or not you use cannabis. Having more information can help you decide. Here are some facts about cannabis and some examples of how it can affect you and others around you.

What is cannabis?

Cannabis (also called weed, pot, marijuana, dope) is a drug that has both psychoactive and therapeutic effects. Psychoactive means that it can change the way a person thinks, acts or feels. It can be smoked, vaped or eaten.

Cannabis comes in many forms including:

- dried flowers or leaves
- hash
- oils
- capsules and pills
- edibles (e.g., baked goods, butter and candies).



Using cannabis can make you feel or act:

- relaxed, lively, talkative or giggly
- anxious, fearful or confused
- tired or drowsy
- off balance
- more hungry (having “the munchies”).

It can also cause:

- red eyes
- dry mouth and throat
- difficulty breathing
- increased heart rate
- decreased blood pressure.



How cannabis affects you will depend on:

- how much or how often you use it
- whether you smoke, vape or eat it
- your mood
- the environment you’re in (e.g., people, location, circumstances)
- whether you have certain pre-existing health conditions
- whether you’ve taken any alcohol or other drugs (illegal, prescription, over-the-counter or herbal).

Using cannabis regularly when you’re young (especially under the age of 16) can affect many areas of your health, including:

- increased risk of problems with your health, education and social life
- changes in brain development (the brain is not fully developed until about the age of 25)
- increased risk of mental health challenges
- risk of physical dependence, if cannabis is used regularly over a long period.



Finding your safe space

However you choose to use cannabis, it should always be in a space where you feel safe.

A safe space can include:

- a familiar location
- being with a trusted friend
- having a trusted adult you can call (in case something unexpected happens).

If you’re having trouble reaching out, try to talk or text with a helpline—like Kids Help Phone (1 800 668-6868), or text CONNECT to 686868 to chat with a volunteer crisis responder.



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For more information, download *The Blunt Truth; Useful tips about safer ways to use cannabis*
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