



Medical Marijuana

Medical marijuana is legal for Massachusetts residents 18 years and older who have been diagnosed by a MA licensed health care provider with an approved, debilitating medical condition. Qualifying patients must obtain a written certification from their health care provider and a registration card from the state. Medical marijuana can only be bought or sold at state-licensed dispensaries.

What Does the Research Say?

- Evidence suggests marijuana or cannabinoids (active compounds in the marijuana plant) are effective in treating chronic pain, chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting, and improving patient-reported multiple sclerosis spasticity symptoms.
- Limited or no evidence exists suggesting marijuana or cannabinoids are effective in treating other health conditions.

Who Qualifies?

- Patients certified by a health care provider that they are being treated for a qualifying condition:
 - Cancer, Glaucoma, HIV, AIDS, Hepatitis C, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), Crohn's Disease, Parkinson's Disease, Multiple Sclerosis, and other conditions as determined by a healthcare provider
- Those under 18 must have a life-limiting condition diagnosed by two licensed certifying physicians.

Before Using Medical Marijuana Consider...

- Like all medications, there are risks associated with medical marijuana including:
 - Addiction/dependence
 - Heart and lung damage leading to a greater risk of bronchitis, cough, phlegm production, stroke, and heart disease
 - Problems with attention, memory, and learning
 - Increased risk for temporary psychosis and long-lasting mental disorders
 - Harmful effects to babies through the placental barrier and breast milk
- Driving under the influence of marijuana is illegal and can negatively affect reaction time, coordination, and concentration, increasing the risk of a car crash.

What is CBD?

- CBD is a cannabinoid derived from hemp
- Unlike THC, current research suggests it is non-addictive and does not make you high
- Some research suggests CBD is effective in treating seizures.
- There has only been limited research on the efficacy of CBD for treating all other health conditions.
- Non-prescription CBD products are currently unregulated and not approved by the FDA.

Talk to your health care provider about your treatment options and possible side effects if you are considering medical marijuana or CBD.

City of Newton, MA



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

For more information, visit www.newtonma.gov/marijuana

Information from NIH, CDC, MDPH, National Academy of Sciences, & WHO. Last revised March 2019.