

# SAFER ADULT MARIJUANA USE

In Massachusetts, it is legal for adults 21 and older to use marijuana. Whether you're a first time user or a current user, it is important to think about how marijuana use affects you and your family's health.

## QUICK TIPS FOR SAFER USE

- **DON'T USE AND DRIVE:** Driving under the influence of marijuana is illegal and can double your chances of being in an accident.
- **KEEP IT LOCKED UP:** Keep your marijuana locked up at home. Marijuana affects children more strongly than adults. If they accidentally ingest marijuana-containing products, it could cause poisoning.
- **START SLOW AND KEEP IT LOW:** If it's your first time using marijuana or it's been a while, find a strain with low THC percentage. Higher THC content will create a more intense "high." If you smoke or vape marijuana, you may feel the effects right away, but it can take between 1.5 - 4 hours to feel the effects of edibles. The effects of edibles can last longer than if you smoke or vape.

## KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT

- Marijuana grown today has a higher percentage of THC (the chemical that makes you "high") than it used to. The higher THC content will have a stronger effect on your brain and behavior.
- Marijuana affects everyone differently. Different strains, doses, and forms have different effects. Carefully read the product label, which will tell you serving size, cannabinoid profile, THC content, and directions for use.
- Breathing in any type of smoke is bad for your lungs. Long-term use of combustible marijuana products may damage your lungs and can cause increased phlegm, coughing, and decrease your oxygen levels. Marijuana smoke contains many of the same toxins as tobacco smoke.
- Don't use alcohol and marijuana at the same time. Mixing alcohol and marijuana results in greater impairment.
- Marijuana with THC may impair your judgment and coordination. Make sure you are in a safe environment if you use marijuana.

## YOUR HOME AND FAMILY

- If you have marijuana products in your home, keep them locked in childproof containers. Children may mistake marijuana-containing products for regular food and candy. Child consumption could result in poisoning.
- Breathing in smoke is bad for you and your family's health. If you choose to use combustible marijuana products, refrain from using them indoors or around your family.
- Keep marijuana out of reach of pets. Call a veterinarian if your pet shows the following symptoms of ingesting marijuana: depression and listlessness, loss of motor coordination, loss of balance, vomiting, or low body temperature.

If your child accidentally consumes marijuana, call the Poison Center Hotline at 800-222-1222. If symptoms are severe (difficulty breathing, difficulty walking/sitting up, excessive sleepiness), call 911 or go to the emergency room right away.

For more information, visit [www.newtonma.gov/marijuana](http://www.newtonma.gov/marijuana)

Information from NIH, CDC, & MDPH. Last Revised January 2019.

City of Newton, MA



Public Health  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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## FAQs

### Where can I buy it?

In Massachusetts, marijuana can be purchased at any state-licensed recreational dispensary. Buying marijuana anywhere else is illegal.

### Can I use marijuana in public?

You cannot consume marijuana in any form in public.

### Can I use marijuana at work?

Employers can restrict the consumption of marijuana in the workplace and may require drug testing for marijuana.

### Is synthetic marijuana the same as marijuana? Is it safe to use?

Synthetic marijuana, commonly called Spice, K2, or Herbal Incense is not the same as marijuana. It is dried plant material containing illegal chemicals which mimic THC. It is not safe and can lead to vomiting, agitation, hallucinations, or even death.



### Can I bring marijuana when I travel?

It is legal to have marijuana anywhere in MA as long as it was purchased from a licensed store. Remember it is only legal to have up to one ounce of marijuana at a time and it should be stored out of reach when driving. It is illegal to cross state lines with marijuana.

### Is it possible to overdose on marijuana?

A fatal overdose is unlikely. However, using high concentrations of THC can lead to poisoning, injuries, and accidents. If someone has used marijuana and is having trouble breathing, has pale skin, or is unresponsive, call 911.

### Is it legal or safe to drive while high?

It is illegal and dangerous to drive while under the influence of marijuana. Driving under the influence of marijuana can double the chances of being in an accident.

### Is marijuana addictive?

Marijuana can be addictive, especially for those who start using it in their teens. About 1 in 10 marijuana users will become addicted. If you or a loved one is looking for help with marijuana addiction or dependence, check out the resources below:

### Recovery Resources

**Newton Health and Human Services Department**  
617-796-1420

(M-F, 8:30-5) Available for consults to find resources

**MA Substance Use Helpline**  
800-327-5050 | [helplinema.org](http://helplinema.org)

Referrals to public & private treatment programs

**Interface Referral Service**  
888-244-6843

(M-F, 9-5) Consults & personalized referrals for outpatient treatment

### Allies in Recovery

<http://alliesinrecovery.net>

Online learning platform for family members struggling with a loved one's addiction

For more information, visit [www.newtonma.gov/marijuana](http://www.newtonma.gov/marijuana)

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