Guidance on the Suggested Use of Medical Cannabis

Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis

About this document: The following information on the use of medical cannabis serves as a suggested use guide for those participating in the Utah Medical Cannabis Program. The intended audience for this document includes qualified medical providers, pharmacy medical providers, patients intending to use medical cannabis, and caregivers of patients intending to use medical cannabis.

This document details the guidance on the use of medical cannabis for chronic pain. This document does not include general instructions on the use of medical cannabis, contraindications, warnings, precautions and adverse reactions to using cannabis and drug-to-drug interactions which could be found in the extended guidance document titled Guidance on the Suggested Use of Medical Cannabis. The extended guidance document can be found on the Utah Department of Health Center for Medical Cannabis website (www.medicalcannabis.utah.gov).

About the authors: This document was authored by the Utah Cannabinoid Product Board and Utah Department of Health staff.

About the Utah Cannabinoid Product Board: Under Utah Health Code 26-61-201, the Cannabinoid Product Board is a board of medical research professionals and physicians who meet on a voluntary basis to review and discuss any available scientific research related to the human use of cannabis, cannabinoid product or an expanded cannabinoid product that was conducted under a study approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB) or was conducted and approved by the federal government.
DISCLAIMER

The following information on the use of medical cannabis serves as a suggested use guide for those participating in the Utah Medical Cannabis Program. This document has been vetted and approved by the Utah Cannabinoid Product Board under Utah Health Code 26-61-202.

This document is a summary of available peer-reviewed literature concerning potential therapeutic uses and harmful effects of cannabis and cannabinoids. With the ongoing nature of cannabis and cannabinoid research, it is not meant to be complete or comprehensive and should be used as a limited complement to other reliable sources of information. This document is not a systematic review or meta-analysis of the literature and has not rigorously evaluated the quality and weight of the available evidence. There is a lack of controlled clinical trials yielding high level evidence of predictable therapeutic benefit for any given condition other than those for FDA approved formulations. This document includes warnings and risks related to the use of cannabis including cannabis use disorder, potentially irreversible brain damage/mental illness, and legal liability for DUI and potential for adverse work-related consequences.

All patrons participating in the Utah Medical Cannabis Program are advised to use this document and any such document produced from this original document as informational and educational. The use of medical cannabis is at one’s own risk. **Medical cannabis is NOT a first line therapy for most medical conditions.**

The information in this document is intended to help as far as available data allows Utah health care decision-makers, health care professionals, health systems leaders, and Utah Medical Cannabis patients to make well-informed decisions and thereby improve the quality of health care outcomes in patients using medical cannabis use. While patients and others may access this document, the document is made available for informational purposes only and no representations or warranties are made with respect to its fitness for any particular purpose. The information in this document should not be used as a substitute for professional medical advice or as a substitute for the application of clinical judgment in respect of the care of a particular patient or other professional judgment in any decision-making process.

Smoking cannabis is not permitted under the Utah Medical Cannabis Act. Any mention of smoking in this document refers to the method of use for a particular study and is being stated in the document as a for your information only. The Utah Department of Health, the Cannabinoid Product Board and the State of Utah do not promote smoking as a method of cannabis use.

The Utah Department of Health (UDOH) and the Utah Cannabinoid Product Board (CPB) does not endorse any information, drugs, therapies, treatments, products, processes, or services. While care has been taken to ensure that the information prepared by the UDOH and the CPB in this document is accurate, the UDOH does not make any guarantees to that effect. The UDOH does not guarantee and is not responsible for the quality, currency, propriety, accuracy, or reasonableness of any statements, information, or conclusions contained in any third-party materials used in preparing this document. The views and opinions of third parties published in this document do not necessarily state or reflect those of the UDOH. The UDOH is not responsible for any errors, omissions, injury, loss, or damage arising from or relating to the use (or misuse) of any information, statements, or conclusions contained in or implied by the contents of this document or any of the source materials.

This document may contain links to third-party websites. The UDOH does not have control over the content of such sites. The UDOH does not make any guarantee with respect to any information contained on such third-party sites and the UDOH is not responsible for any injury, loss, or damage suffered as a
result of using such third-party sites. The UDOH has no responsibility for the collection, use, and disclosure of personal information by third-party sites.

Subject to the aforementioned limitations, the views expressed herein are those of UDOH and do not necessarily represent the views of the federal government or any third-party supplier of information. This document is prepared and intended for use in the context of the Utah Medical Cannabis Act. The use of this document outside of Utah is done so at the user’s own risk.

This disclaimer and any questions or matters of any nature arising from or relating to the content or use (or misuse) of this document will be governed by and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of Utah applicable therein, and all proceedings shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of the State of Utah.

The copyright and other intellectual property rights in this document are owned by the UDOH and its licensors. Users are permitted to make copies of this document for non-commercial purposes only, provided it is not modified when reproduced and appropriate credit is given to the UDOH, the CPB and its licensors.
**IMPORTANT NOTE:** As always, in the event of significant side effects, stop use of medical cannabis until side effects have resolved, and then reduce to previous, best-tolerated dose. To avoid unwanted psychoactive side effects, “**start low and go slow**” especially when using cannabis products for the first time or using new dosages or types of products.

There is insufficient evidence to support or refute the conclusion that medical cannabis or cannabinoids are an effective or ineffective treatment for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS).

*Smoking cannabis is not permitted under the Utah Medical Cannabis Act. Any mention of smoking in this document refers to the method of use for a particular study and is being stated in the document as a for your information only. The Utah Department of Health, the Cannabinoid Product Board and the State of Utah do not promote smoking as a method of cannabis use.*

Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) is a progressive and fatal adult neurological disease resulting from the death of anterior horn motor neurons. The cause of this disorder is not known and there is no known treatment. Very limited evidence from pre-clinical studies of ALS suggests that certain cannabinoids modestly delay disease progression and prolong survival in animal models of ALS, while the results from a very limited number of clinical studies are mixed. Due to the small number of studies and equivocal results, evidence-based recommendations for the use of medical cannabis in the treatment of ALS cannot be made. However, because of the bleak prognosis for patients with ALS, a therapeutic trial of medical cannabis in patients with ALS may be reasonable.