

# Patient product information for medical cannabis



Medical cannabis is a treatment that uses the *cannabis sativa* plant to treat the symptoms for certain specific medical conditions, such as pain, seizures, or cancer<sup>1</sup>.

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## Product usage

Use only as directed by your pharmacist or recommending provider.

## Possible side effects

You may experience different side effects depending on the medical cannabis product you use. Medical cannabis may cause drowsiness and dizziness. Use care when operating a car or heavy machinery.

## Common side effects<sup>2</sup>

Commonly reported side effects include anxiety, dizziness, fatigue, lightheadedness, mild nausea, and dry mouth.

## Serious side effects

In rare cases, people have serious side effects from using medical cannabis, such as cannabinoid hyperemesis syndrome, cannabis use disorder, and cannabis withdrawals.

## Cannabinoid hyperemesis syndrome<sup>3</sup>

Cannabinoid hyperemesis syndrome is a rare side effect where someone has severe nausea, vomiting, and stomach pain when they use cannabis. Stop using medical cannabis and talk to your medical provider right away<sup>4</sup> if this happens to you.

## Cannabis use disorder<sup>5</sup>

Cannabis use disorder is a health condition where someone develops a dependence on cannabis or can't stop using it, even if they want or try to.

Your medical provider will assess if you are at a higher risk for developing cannabis use disorder when you meet to get a medical cannabis recommendation. Ask them if you have questions or concerns about cannabis use disorder.

## Cannabis withdrawal

Cannabis withdrawal describes the physical and psychological symptoms that occur when someone has become dependent<sup>6</sup> on cannabis usage and suddenly stops using. Withdrawal symptoms can include<sup>7</sup> anxiety, anger, headaches, and trouble sleeping.

Talk to your medical provider or pharmacist if you have questions about cannabis withdrawal.

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Call the Utah Poison Control Center **1-800-222-1222** if you think you took too much medical cannabis, you have serious side effects, or a child or pet takes it accidentally. **Call 911 if it is an emergency.**

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## Warnings and precautions

### Drug interactions<sup>8</sup>

Medical cannabis can interact with prescription medications, over-the-counter medicines or supplements, and anesthesia. Always tell a medical provider or a pharmacist that you use medical cannabis so they can check for medication interactions.

This is especially important if you take these medications<sup>9</sup>:

- **Blood thinners or blood clot medications<sup>10</sup>** such as warfarin (Coumadin), clopidogrel (Plavix), or cilostazol (Pletal).
- **Anti-seizure medications<sup>11</sup>** such as clobazam (Onfi or Sympazan), clonazepam (Klonopin), or valproic acid.
- **Cancer medications** such as everolimus (Afinitor).
- **Some mental health medications** such as citalopram (Celexa), lorazepam (Ativan),

quetiapine (Seroquel), remeron (Mirtazapine), trazodone (Desyrel).

- **Heart medications** such as amiodarone (Pacerone).
- **Medications that make you feel tired** such as eszopiclone (Lunesta), zolpidem (Ambien), and allergy or cold medicines.
- **Immunosuppressant medications** such as tacrolimus (Protopic, Prograf).

Follow-up with a medical provider any time you have questions, start a new medication, or are diagnosed with new health conditions.

## Contraindications

Some health conditions may affect whether medical cannabis is an appropriate treatment option for you. They include heart disease, liver disease, pregnancy or breastfeeding, some mental health conditions, and lung disease.

## General dosage guidelines

Individualized dosing regimen is determined in consultation with your medical provider and the medical cannabis pharmacist.

## Use these tips when you try a medical cannabis product:

Start low and go slow.

- Take a small dose of a new medical cannabis product at first, and increase the dose slowly over time until you find what works best for you.
- Doing this can decrease your side effects and make it easier to find the right dose.

Track your medical cannabis use.

- Write down which product you used, the amount, and any effects (good or bad) that you had.
- Share this information with your medical provider or a pharmacist to figure out products and doses that work best for you.

## Proper storage

- Keep medical cannabis in its original package that's child-resistant and has warning labels.
- Store it in a child-proof container that is out of kids' sight and reach.
- Store it in a different place than the rest of your food.
- Put it away right after using it.

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## References

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