

### *How to Reduce Your Risks*

The only way to be completely safe when using cannabis is to not use cannabis. However, there are a few tips that will help ensure that your consumption of cannabis is safe and healthy for you.

### *Use Clean Smoking Devices*

Dirty bongs in particular are breeding grounds for fungus and bacteria that is then inhaled into your lungs. By maintaining a clean smoking device, pathogens are unable to be inhaled into your lungs.

If you are wondering when you should change your bong water, a good rule of thumb is: if you wouldn't drink the water, you shouldn't smoke the water!

### *Use Filter Devices*

There is a company called Moose Labs that produces smoking devices that allow for the use of a filter. This filter is called MouthPeace and collects much of the harmful residue that would otherwise enter your lungs. It also prevents the spread of germs if you are sharing smoking devices.

### *Use Cannabis Vaporizers*

Preliminary studies have demonstrated that folks who use cannabis vaporizers may have reduced exposure to tar and other carcinogens that present themselves through certain cannabis consumption methods. Research on this topic is still ongoing.

### *Cannabis Edibles*

Use of edibles may also mitigate physical health risks associated with inhaling cannabis, however it is important to ingest cannabis carefully.

### *Remember*

Time is the only thing that will end the effects of cannabis. Other methods may help to calm one down, but will not get rid of the high.

Other methods include: eating, drinking water, sleeping, talking to a friend, moving to a safe space, or taking a cold shower. Black peppercorn has been found to help reduce anxiety associated with cannabis if chewed in ball form or sniffed in powder form. Zesting a lemon and chewing on it or drinking lemon juice may help with anxiety/paranoia. Finally, CBD products have been shown to reduce the effects of THC so consuming CBD products may help to reduce the symptoms of overconsumption.

The best way to deal with overconsumption is to not overconsume. When in doubt, start low and go slow in regards to consuming cannabis.

### *Local Partners*

There are many stores and dispensaries in the Peterborough/Nogojwanong area that offer cannabis and cannabis-related products and devices. The following stores offer Trent students a discount when you present valid student ID:

#### *SPARQ (3 Locations)*

340 Charlotte St.  
809 Chemong Rd. in Brookdale Plaza  
861 Lansdowne St. W. Unit #4  
(15% off student discount)

#### *Peace Pipe*

408 George St. N.  
(15% off student discount only valid from  
November 22nd-26th, 2021)

#### *Talk to us!*

If you have any questions about safe cannabis consumption and practices, or about this campaign, please contact:

Carter Tongs  
TCSA Vice President Student Health & Wellness  
(705) 748-1011 ext. 6174  
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trentcentral.ca

Follow us on Instagram: @theTCSA

NOW I KNOW MY  
CBDs

Safe Cannabis  
Consumption

tcsa

## What is Cannabis?

Marijuana, Weed, Pot, Ganja, Devil's Lettuce. This plant goes by many names but ultimately they all refer to cannabis use. Cannabis is often used for therapeutic purposes, but is also used in social contexts. Cannabis may be inhaled through smoking joints, pipes, bong, or ingested through the use of edibles.

### THC

Tetrahydrocannabinol, or THC, is the main psychoactive component of cannabis, and it is one of 483 known compounds found within the plant. THC is responsible for the way your brain and body respond to cannabis, including euphoria (or the "high" or intoxication), altered states of mind and sense of time, changes in appetite, and relaxation, to name a few. THC has some therapeutic effects but it also has harmful effects, such as difficulty concentrating, anxiety, distrust, panic, and impaired body movement and short-term memory. Products with a higher THC content may pose more health risks.

### How is THC Metabolized?

THC begins to breakdown outside the body when it is heated, turning into delta 9-THC. This molecule is then absorbed through inhalation or ingestion and then further metabolized into 11-OH-THC. Both delta-9-THC and 11-OH-THC have psychoactive effects in the body. 11-OH-THC is then further metabolized by the liver into THCCOOH. This compound is inactive and is stored in fat tissue until it is excreted through urine or feces. The THCCOOH is slowly released into the bloodstream as levels drop, which is why THC can be detected in your system for up to about 30 days.

### How does THC Produce its Effects?

Both delta-9-THC and 11-OH-THC have a similar structure to neurotransmitters that carry information in the brain, and they produce psychoactive effects by the interacting with the brain endocannabinoid system. These THC derivatives activate the brain's reward system and trigger the release of dopamine (a feel good chemical).

### CBD

Unlike THC, cannabidiol, or CBD, does not produce a high or intoxication. There is some evidence that CBD may block or lower some of the effects of THC on the mind. This may occur when the amount of CBD in the cannabis is the same or higher than the amount of THC. CBD is also being studied for its possible therapeutic uses.

### Terpenes

Terpenes are chemicals made and stored in the trichomes of the cannabis plant, with the cannabinoids. Terpenes give cannabis its distinctive smell.

## Consuming Cannabis

### Smoking Cannabis

The inhalation of smoke or vapors released by heating the flowers, leaves, or extracts of cannabis and releases the THC. When inhaling cannabis, delta-9-THC enters your bloodstream through your lungs and travels quickly to your brain. The effects can be felt in a few seconds to a few minutes. The effects typically last from 1-3 hours but can last up to 8 hours.

### Ingesting Cannabis

When ingesting cannabis, delta-9-THC enters your digestive tract where it passes through the liver and is broken down into the still active form 11-OH-THC. The 11-OH-THC then enters the bloodstream and reaches the brain, producing the "high". This process takes longer for the effects to take effect--about 30 minutes to up to 2 hours. The effects may then be felt for up to 12 hours, with residual effects lasting up to 24 hours.

Due to the delayed effect, some users may opt to ingest more cannabis which can lead to overconsumption leading to anxiety, paranoia, or nausea and vomiting. It is better to wait at least 4 hours before ingesting more cannabis products.

The effects of ingesting cannabis can be more intense for some people than that of inhaling cannabis products. It is a good idea to start with low doses to determine how ingesting cannabis will impact you before increasing doses.

### Cannabis and Other Substances

Alcohol increases the intoxicating and impairing effects of cannabis. Consuming cannabis and alcohol at the same time can significantly raise your risk of over-intoxication and impairment. To reduce the risk of these negative experiences, stick to either cannabis or alcohol, not both.

Also, avoid mixing cannabis with nicotine or any intoxicating substance, including stimulants ("uppers") and depressants ("downers"), as the mix can cause serious health complications.

If you are taking or planning to take prescription medications, speak to a healthcare practitioner about whether cannabis interferes with them.

## Cannabis Use and Your Health

### Addiction

Prolonged use of cannabis has been associated with addiction. Not everyone who uses cannabis will become addicted; however, those who smoke daily or almost daily before the age of 25 are more likely to develop addictions.

Individuals who are addicted to cannabis and stop use may experience withdrawal symptoms including irritability, depressed mood, sleep issues, cravings, nervousness or anxiety, decreased appetite, weight loss, and restlessness. Physical withdrawal symptoms include abdominal pain, shakiness/tremors, sweating, fever, chills, and headache. These symptoms could last from about two days after stopping smoking until a few weeks after cessation.

Prolonged use of cannabis is associated with memory problems, issues with paying attention, and difficulty making decisions. Stopping the use of cannabis may cause these problems to go away, depending on how young you were when you started using.

### Other Mental Health Disorders

Using cannabis regularly and continuously over time makes you more likely to experience anxiety, depression, psychosis, and schizophrenia. Stopping use of cannabis may help to reduce these symptoms.

### Physical Health and Cannabis Use

Cannabis smoke contains many of the same harmful substances as tobacco smoke. Also, like smoking cigarettes, smoking cannabis can damage the lungs and result in a cough or wheezing and other breathing symptoms. This can cause harm to your lungs.

### Cannabis Over-Intoxication (Greening Out)

- While overconsumption of cannabis (or greening out) will not directly kill you, you may still experience
- adverse effects such as chest pain, anxiety, panic attacks, respiratory depression, rapid heartbeat, nausea/vomiting, or psychotic episodes. Overconsumption may indirectly cause death if another depressant is consumed or if one
- has an underlying heart condition.

### Cannabis Use During COVID

In the context of COVID-19, it is recommended that you do not share smoking devices as this may increase your risk of catching or spreading COVID-19. Instead, it is a good idea to bring your own smoking device or a joint if you are going to consume with friends. Other products may be available such as removable mouth pieces for bong, joints, or pipes.

