



**MDAM**  
MOOD DISORDERS  
ASSOCIATION OF MANITOBA  
WESTMAN

*Helping People Help Themselves*

Compiled by 2023 Green Team

# Cannabis

Cannabis (also known as marijuana) is a psychoactive drug. It is known for its relaxing and calming effects. Sometimes it is prescribed to help with medical conditions. It can have both positive and negative side effects. It is advisable that you consult your doctor before using cannabis for a medical condition (Pahr and Sharon, 2023).

## Medical Benefits of Using Cannabis

Studies suggest that medical use of cannabis may help treat a number of conditions and/or their symptoms, including anxiety, sleep disorders, chronic pain, spasticity related to multiple sclerosis, arthritis inflammation, and Crohn's disease. However, because not all long-term side effects are known, it is important to talk to a doctor before combining medical marijuana into any treatment plan (Bauer, 2022).



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## Side Effects of Using Cannabis

People use cannabis with the intention of altering their state of consciousness, or to achieve a state of relaxation, but there are some long and short-term side effects to consider (Holland, 2023):

**Some problematic short-term side effects include:**

- Poor short-term memory
- Impaired ability to drive or operate machinery
- Anxiety
- Increased heart rate
- Impaired judgment and decision-making
- Coordination issues
- Delayed reaction time
- Nausea
- Lethargy
- Anxiety
- Increased heart rate
- Decreased blood pressure
- Paranoia

**Some desirable short-term side effects include:**

- Relaxation
- Experiencing things around you, such as sights and sounds, more intensely
- Increased appetite

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## Side Effects of Using Cannabis continued...

Some long-term effects include:

- People who start using cannabis in their teens
  - Tend to have more memory and learning problems than those who don't use cannabis in their teens
- Addiction - unlike the nicotine in cigarettes, there is nothing in cannabis naturally that can make you physically addicted to it. Any issues with dependency typically stem from missing the feeling or being bothered by pain you now feel.
- It may be a risk factor for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)

(Holland, 2023)

## References

Pahr , K., & Sharon , A. (2018, August 3). Cannabidiol (CBD): Is It Safe, Effective, and More. *Healthline*.

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