



CANNABIS



Cannabis, (also known as marijuana), is a plant. It can also be made into concentrated forms put into oils, butter, and a sticky substance called “wax” or “shatter.” Cannabis is usually smoked or vaped but it can also be consumed in products called “edibles. Cannabis has over 400 identified chemical compounds. THC is the main psychoactive ingredient in cannabis: this chemical affects the mind and gets people high.

EFFECTS

- Relaxation and calmness
- Stimulation or increased creativity
- Helps treat pain and anxiety, and encourages appetite in cancer patients
- May laugh more easily
- May take a longer time to respond/react or seem distracted
- May feel nauseated, have mild hallucinations, or become paranoid at higher doses

RISKS

- The effects of cannabis can be hard to predict, and depend very heavily on the dose, the way it’s consumed, the strain (type of plant) and the person who is using it.
- Although you can’t die from cannabis use, people can take too much and experience very uncomfortable highs and/or panic. Using it with alcohol can make this worse.
- Prolonged or habitual cannabis use can make mental health problems worse. Researchers are particularly concerned about the ways in which cannabis use could impact teenage brains, especially in people who start using it before age 18.
- Sometimes synthetic cannabinoids (which is not cannabis) are sold as cannabis. Synthetic cannabinoids can cause shortness of breath, rapid heart rate, and sometimes death.

HARM REDUCTION TIPS

- Cannabis is an incredibly complex drug. If you are thinking about using it, you should learn about how strains differ, and how different forms can impact the body and mind differently.
- Abstinence is the most effective way to reduce the risk of harm; but if that's not for you, delaying use until at least age 18 can reduce the risks to the developing brain.
- If you are going to use it, start low and go slow - this means taking the lowest possible dose, and waiting a while before dosing again. Remember, edibles take a really long time (up to 3 or 4 hours) for the full effect to kick in. If you are smoking or vaping it takes around 30 minutes.
- If you can avoid using it at the same time as other drugs, it will reduce the chances of a bad experience.

Want more info? Check out [The Blunt Truth](#) and [Dance Safe](#).



Interior Health