

Treatment for Cannabis Use Disorder

If you or a loved one is having problems with cannabis usage, there are resources in Western New York and beyond.

- Buffalo and Erie County Addiction Hotline:
(716) 831-7007
- New York State's HOPEline:
Call **1-(877)-846-7369** or text **HOPEline** Short Code at **467369**.
- **SAMHSA**
(Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration):
Call the National Helpline:
1-800-662-HELP, or visit the Behavioral Health Treatment Services Locator:
findtreatment.samhsa.gov/

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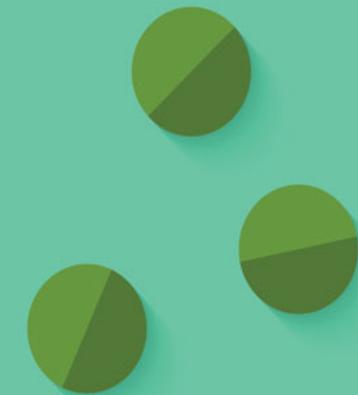


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Created May 2021, Rev. January 2023



Harm Reduction and Cannabis Usage



www.erie.gov/cannabis

Advantages of Legalized Cannabis

- Regulate and label products for safety, purity, and strength
- Reduce arrests and criminal records for minor offenses
- Buying cannabis products legally reduces contact with unregulated black-market products
- Tax revenue for local communities
- May be a safer medical alternative to opioids for some
- Increased funding for access to harm reduction resources and treatment

At-Risk Populations

Even if it's legal for adults, some people should still not use cannabis:

- **Youth and Teens:** It can affect brain development, harm the lungs, and increase the chance of future cannabis and other drug addictions.
- **Pregnant People:** The effects are still being investigated. Affects birth weight; may affect fetal development; increases risk of disorders such as ADHD, depression, or autism.
- **People with diagnosed mental health conditions, or family history of psychosis:** Evidence suggests that cannabis use can increase risk for schizophrenia, particularly for people with family history of schizophrenia, or who started using cannabis early.

Using Cannabis Responsibly

- Follow state guidelines for the legal age of use, how much you can possess, and where you can use it.
- Don't drive or operate dangerous equipment while intoxicated.
- **Start low and go slow** with edible

cannabis as effects greatly vary from person to person.

- Read labels to be aware of the dose you are consuming to avoid overconsumption.
- Stop using cannabis if it is harming your concentration, learning, or long-term motivation.
- Don't use cannabis daily for recreational purposes.
- Only use cannabis from trusted sources. Don't use cannabis products that seem contaminated or spoiled.
- Avoid "synthetic cannabis" products; they are not the same as natural cannabis products, and much more dangerous.
- Avoid oils, waxes, or "dabs": they take effect quickly, and can overwhelm the user.
- Don't use cannabis with other drugs (including alcohol and tobacco).

Methods of Ingestion

Every method of using cannabis has drawbacks.

- Smoking cannabis exposes you to tar.
- Sharing a smoking device can transfer harmful microbes through saliva.
- A bong or water pipe must be cleaned regularly to remove harmful microbes.
- An improvised or homemade bong or pipe may release harmful fumes when heated.
- Vaping can cause lung damage (EVALI—E-cigarette or vaping product associated lung injury).
- Edibles absorb slowly depending on an individual's metabolism, making it difficult to predict or control the effects.

Short-term Risks

- Lung irritation
- Decreased mental ability
- Anxiety/panic and paranoia/psychosis
- Motor Vehicle Accidents

Long-term Hazards

Know your limits! If cannabis use is hurting your quality of life, cut back or stop altogether.

- Apathy or loss of motivation
- Decreased memory and learning ability
- Decreased sex drive
- Mental health issues
- Excessive use
- Excessive weight gain
- Cravings or obsession with cannabis
- Using cannabis and doing risky things (driving, using power tools)
- Using cannabis to treat withdrawal symptoms
- Cannabis hyperemesis syndrome

Withdrawal Symptoms

Some people may have withdrawal symptoms when stopping cannabis use. These may include:

- Irritability, cravings, anxiety
- Depression, anger, or confusion
- Sleep problems, restlessness, appetite loss
- Tremors, night sweats, or diarrhea

Symptoms usually peak about 4-5 days after stopping use, and they usually subside within about 2 weeks.

Treatment and Recovery

- Therapy (such as motivational interviewing and cognitive-behavioral therapy) may help with quitting.

Definitions:

Cannabis: Marijuana.

CBD: Cannabidiol, one of the main extracts of cannabis. Known for pain relief effects.

Dabs: Oils or waxes containing THC.

Dabbing: heating oils or waxes that contain THC.

Edibles: food products that contain THC and/or CBD.

E-cigs: Vaping devices.

E-juice: liquid used in vaping devices.

Synthetic cannabinoids: Man-made chemicals, including THC, sprayed onto inert herbs.

THC: Tetrahydrocannabinol, one of the main extracts of cannabis. Known for its psychoactive effects.

Vaping: Inhaling heated, vaporized liquid from an electronic device (vape or e-cigarette).

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