

CANNABIS

Cannabis, often referred to as marijuana, has been part of human culture for thousands of years. Known for both its **psychoactive** and **medicinal** properties, this complex plant has been used in various ways across different cultures and eras.

WHAT IS CANNABIS?

The cannabis plant contains hundreds of chemical compounds, the most well-known being **THC** (Tetrahydrocannabinol) and **CBD** (Cannabidiol). THC is primarily responsible for the plant's psychoactive effects, while CBD is lauded for its potential therapeutic benefits.

Used **recreationally, medicinally, or industrially** (in the form of hemp), cannabis is a multifaceted plant with a wide array of uses and effects. **It's important to be aware of the health and safety risks associated with the various methods of use.**



WHY PEOPLE USE CANNABIS

RECREATIONAL: To experience the psychoactive effects of THC, such as **relaxation, heightened senses, or altered perception of time.**

MEDICINAL: To manage various health conditions, including **alleviating chronic pain, reducing nausea** during chemotherapy, **improving sleep**, and to help with conditions like epilepsy or multiple sclerosis.

SOCIAL: To enhance feelings of **camaraderie** and facilitating bonding experiences.

MENTAL HEALTH: As a form of self-medication for mental health issues like **anxiety or depression.**

SPIRITUAL: In some cultures and beliefs, as a **spiritual tool for meditation** or as part of religious rituals.

CREATIVITY: To **stimulate creativity** and gain a different perspective.

HOW TO REDUCE POTENTIAL HEALTH RISKS

Reducing the potential health risks of cannabis involves a combination of mindful practices and informed decision-making. Here are some ways to do so:

LIMIT USE: Frequent or heavy use can increase health risks. Limiting yourself to occasional use can help reduce these risks. If you're having trouble controlling your use, get help.

CHOOSE SAFER CONSUMPTION METHODS: Smoking cannabis can harm your lungs. Opt for safer alternatives like vaporizers, edibles, or tinctures.

AVOID: High-potency THC products can increase the risk of dependency and other adverse effects. Also avoid synthetic cannabis products as they are often stronger and potentially more dangerous.

DON'T MIX: Combining cannabis with alcohol or other substances, such as your prescription medications, can enhance effects and risks.

WAIT: Cannabis can impair your ability to drive. Do not operate a car, or other machinery, while using cannabis.

GO SLOW: Especially if you're new to cannabis, start with a small amount and wait to see its effects before taking more.

ABSTAIN: To prevent potential harm to the baby, avoid using cannabis if you're pregnant or planning to become pregnant. Young people should also avoid using cannabis as it can affect memory and learning and attention. Finally, those with a family history of psychosis should avoid usage as it can increase risks of some mental illness.

Remember, these strategies can help reduce, but not eliminate, the risks associated with cannabis use. Always consult with healthcare professionals for personalized advice.



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CANNABIS SAFETY, TUNE INTO THE MONTHLY STRIVE WEBINAR WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 30, 2023, 12:00-12:30 EST