

Cannabis and Youth

change
to chill
by Allina Health



Basics Of Cannabis

Cannabis is a species of plant. It can be found naturally, also grown by individuals or organizations on farms or labs. It became legal in Minnesota in 2023. Common names: THC, marijuana, weed, pot, 420, or edibles (gummies, THC beverages). Learn more about terms and devices from the CDC.

THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) is the psychoactive chemical causing the "high". Forms of THC: Delta-8, Delta-9, Delta-10. Delta-9 is the more potent form.

Hemp is a lower concentration of THC from cannabis. In 2018, products containing hemp-derived THC were made federally legal for those over age 21.

CBD is also found in cannabis but does not produce a high. Found in oils, lotions and food, it can still affect the user to help pain, sleep or stress. The CBD industry is often unregulated.



How Is Cannabis Used?

Smoked, vaped, or consumed as edibles.

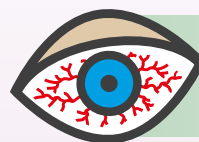
Medical cannabis is legal with a prescription in MN.



Think The Majority Of Teens Use?

92% of MN students reported never using cannabis.
(2025 MN Student Survey)

Signs Of Use



Unusual odor, bloodshot eyes, shifts in mood/behavior.

Increased secrecy, skipping class, decline in motivation and grades.





Edibles

Products such as gummies, beverages, cookies and other treats infused with THC. Often packaged with multiple servings, one can easily over-consume. Edibles are felt slowly (30 min. to 2 hrs.) and the “high” can be felt for several hours.

Effects Of THC

Effects can vary across products and people:

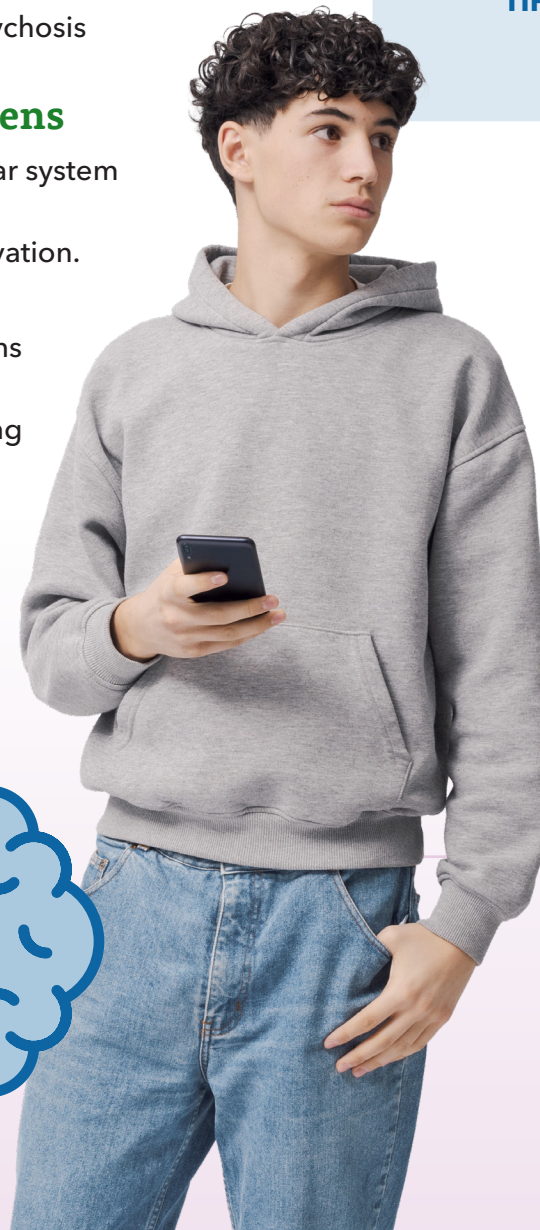
- Relaxed or high feeling
- Slower reaction time, poor focus
- Confusion, anxiety, panic or psychosis

Long-Term Impact On Teens

- Damage to lungs, cardiovascular system and developing brain.
- Academic difficulties, low motivation.
- Risk of accidents and injuries.
- Worsen mental health conditions and risk of addiction.
- Harm to relationships with caring family and friends.

Mental Health And Cannabis

Cannabis use can create a cycle of needing to use more frequently, anxiety/ depression can spike, use can counteract medications. Youth who use high potency THC early and often also have a higher risk of psychosis or schizophrenia.



EXAMPLE

In MN, a product or package is limited to 50 mg THC. One legal serving = 5 mg THC, a mild dose.

Consider a gummy pack with 10 pieces, each 5 mg for a total of 50 mg THC. Consuming all 10 pieces at once would be very intoxicating and long lasting.

TIP: Go low, go slow, know your limits.

Legal Dose Does NOT Mean Safe For Teens

Today’s cannabis has

3X

the strength of THC compared to 25 years ago.

Cannabis harms the developing

brain

1-in-6

teens who start to use cannabis before age 18 become addicted.



Cannabis, Pregnancy And Child Development

Cannabis used during pregnancy may cause fetal brain damage and growth restrictions. THC can also be passed through a nursing mother to a baby. It is unsafe to smoke cannabis around children, and both children and pets can experience poisoning when products are not stored out of reach.



Caregiver Actions

- Talk early and often; express clear disapproval of use.
- Stay involved, monitor activities, have family meals.
- Store and lock cannabis out of reach.
- Driving while impaired with THC is illegal. Other activities can be unsafe too- biking, boating, using machinery.
- If concerned about your child's use, seek understanding first over punishment. If psychosis or addiction issues, seek professional help and counseling.

Resources

Minnesota Department of Health—[BeCannabisAware.org](https://www.be-cannabis-aware.org)

Allina Health—[Substance Use Disorders](#)

SAMHSA—[The Effects, Risks and Side Effects of Marijuana \(Weed, Cannabis, THC\)](#)



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CANNABIS POISONING

While cannabis does not typically result in serious problems for adults, children have more severe reactions and are more likely to require medical attention. Symptoms to look out for include:



VOMITING



CONFUSION



DROWSINESS



UNSTEADINESS

Severe symptoms include slowed breathing, seizure, unresponsiveness, and coma.

If a child consumes cannabis, call 911 or the poison control hotline immediately.

POISON HELP
1-800-222-1222
POISON.ORG



Learn more at changetochill.org