

# CANNABIS: If You Choose to Use

Cannabis and its active components (such as THC and CBD, among other cannabinoids) exist in many forms and strengths and can affect people in different ways.

Cannabis can be smoked in cigarettes (joints), pipes or water pipes (bongs), or vaporized (vaped). Cannabis can be consumed in food or drink products called edibles. It also can be used through tinctures, creams, oils, waxes, suppositories, or inhalers.



## Keep laws and public health guidelines in mind

- Cannabis is legal to use in New Mexico if you are **21 and older** or, if you are under 21 and have an **active and valid medical card**.
- It is **illegal to use cannabis in an unlicensed public space**.
- Individuals over the age of 21 are able to grow **six plants** and **six seedlings** and **no more than 12 plants** and **12 seedlings per household**
- **Do not drive or use heavy machinery while using cannabis.**
- Only purchase from a **licensed cannabis dispensary**.
- **If you feel ill or have negative effects** after using cannabis, **seek help**.
- **Avoid “puff and pass” rotations** and **do not share joints, bongs, pipes, vaporizers or other personal items** with others. Keep these items clean for your own personal use.
- Avoid blowing smoke or vapor into an enclosed or poorly ventilated area. **Never blow smoke or vapor directly at another person or at pets.**

### Use with intention

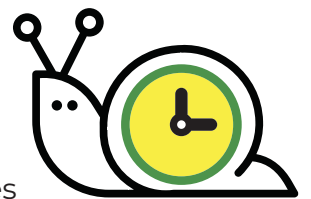
Taking time to reflect on your relationship with cannabis and the reasons you may choose to use can help you have more of the experiences you want to have (and avoid those you don't).



First, think about the feelings, actions or benefits you want to experience from using cannabis such as, relief from pain. Next, think through some of the things you don't want to experience, such as paranoia. Thinking through these types of exercises can be a great starting point to ask questions and better understand your choices around cannabis use.

### Start low and go slow

If you've never used cannabis before, **start low and go slow until you know how it will affect you**. This is especially important when experimenting with edibles and concentrates. Remember, edibles take longer than smoking or vaping cannabis to kick in. Look for products with lower THC levels and wait to see how it affects you before consuming more.



For reference, flower usually contains 10-30% THC while concentrates commonly contain 60-90% or more. If you choose to use, go with products that are within your limits, and always follow the guidelines and directions provided on the original packaging.

### Avoid mixing cannabis with alcohol and other substances

Using one substance at a time is more likely to result in the experiences you want to have. Mixing two or more substances can make it challenging to predict what is going to happen or how you will be affected. Additionally, two or more substances used together can result in harmful side effects. Play it safe by only using one substance at a time.



### Know the serving size, especially for edible cannabis products

**Double check the serving size for edible cannabis products.** A standard serving size contains no more than 10 mg of THC. However, your own tolerance may affect how serving sizes impact you. If it's your first time using edible products, start with a smaller amount (2.5-5 mg). It's also important to remember that it may take anywhere from 30 minutes to 2 hours for edibles to begin to take effect and up to 4 hours to feel the full effect.



### Wait before engaging in activities that may put you at a higher risk

It has been suggested to wait at least **3-6 hours after vaping or smoking** and **6-8 hours after consuming edibles** before engaging in higher risk activities like **driving, skiing or swimming**. These times may vary depending on your tolerance and use. In some cases you may need to wait longer.



### Store cannabis products safely

**Keep cannabis products in their original packaging so they are easily identifiable.** Be sure to store them in a safe area that cannot be accessed by pets or young children. If a pet or child consumes any cannabis products, call a vet or health care provider right away.



### Use with people you trust

Using cannabis with people you know, trust and feel comfortable with is more likely to result in a positive experience. And if help is needed, there is someone else present to get help. Think about ways you can say "no" in case you ever feel pressured to use more than you are comfortable using. For example, you could say, "No thanks, I need to drive home later." or "I'm going to start with this and see how it goes."



### Reduce your frequency

Like other substances, frequent use of cannabis can increase your tolerance, which means it may take more to achieve the same effect. Using cannabis less frequently has also been shown to lower the risk of dependency, negative mental health symptoms and long-term health effects.

