

Talking CANNABIS

CHECK YOURSELF

Be mindful of your own perspectives & judgments around cannabis use & how it may influence your discussions with clients.

Be neutral. Conversations should be open & neutral. Stick to providing facts rather than opinions on what is right or wrong.

Identify your purpose. Just because you're talking openly about drug use doesn't mean that you're encouraging drug use. Cannabis use is a personal choice; your role is to support clients to make informed decisions that will minimize adverse health outcomes.

CREATE A SAFE SPACE

Listen first, without interruption. Allow the client to finish talking. Ask clarifying questions to check your understanding.

Think about language. Use words that encourage openness & understanding. Avoid stigmatizing words (e.g., stoner, user, addict), expressions of disapproval, or lecturing.

Be honest & transparent about the purpose of the conversation & your knowledge level.

Be supportive. When clients feel respected & accepted, they are more likely to reach out for help when needed.

Empower clients to make choices or solutions that they feel good about. Remember, abstinence is not always realistic.

KNOW THE FACTS

Educate yourself on the uses, effects, & risks of cannabis products so you can communicate accurate information:

Community

Key Messaging	Resources
<p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cannabis use is a personal choice. ○ After alcohol, cannabis is the most widely used substance in Canada. ○ The best way to protect your health is to not use cannabis. ○ Avoid using cannabis if you are at risk for mental health or substance use concerns. <p>If you choose to use cannabis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Delay as long as possible. The earlier in life you begin cannabis use, the more likely you are to experience serious health effects. ○ Always purchase cannabis products & equipment from a licensed retailer, whether from a local store or online at ShopCannabisNL. Synthetic cannabis products (i.e., K2, Spice, e-cigarettes) are dangerous and can cause serious health problems. ○ Choose safer methods. There are different ways of using cannabis and some are safer than others: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Smoking cannabis causes harm. If you choose to smoke cannabis, avoid inhaling deeply or holding your breath. 	<p>Cannabis in Newfoundland and Labrador Website</p> <p>Cannabis in Canada: Get the Facts (Government of Canada)</p> <p>Cannabasics - Toolkit for Health Professionals (CPHA)</p> <p>What you Need to Know if You Choose to Consume Cannabis (Health Canada)</p> <p>Cannabis Health Effects (Government of Canada)</p>

- For health reasons, you should avoid: vaping liquid cannabis extracts/pods; and the use of illicit cannabis products & equipment.
- **Start low, go slow.** Choose products with a low amount of THC and an equal or higher amount of CBD.
- **Stick to one.** Mixing cannabis with nicotine, alcohol, or other substances will increase impairment and the risk of serious health effects.
- **Limit and reduce** how often you use cannabis. Try to take breaks or “days off” from cannabis use to reduce the long-term impacts on your health.
- **Practice safe and responsible storage.** Keep cannabis products in a safe place out of reach from children, youth, and pets. Cannabis in food products (edibles) can be especially tempting to curious children. If a child accidentally eats or drinks cannabis, seek medical attention right away.
- **Know when to call for help.** If you ever experience severe symptoms from cannabis, such as panic, confusion, shaking, shortness of breath, and/or vomiting, seek medical attention right away.
- You should speak with your medical and public health professionals for more information about using cannabis and its effects on your health.

Short-term Health Risks

Cannabis use may cause unwanted side effects such as:

- Impaired concentration, memory, and decision-making
- Impaired ability to drive safely (i.e. vehicle, ATV, snowmobile, etc.)
- Feelings of anxiety, paranoia, fear, or panic
- Faster heart rate
- Changes in blood pressure
- Other harms such as over consumption

Long-term Health Risks

Regular and long-term use of cannabis may lead to problems such as:

- Trouble with memory, concentration, and learning
- Difficulty thinking and making decisions
- Lung problems if smoked, including chronic cough, wheezing, and lung infections
- Mental Health problems like anxiety, depression, or psychosis. Your risk increases if you have a personal or family history of these conditions or use products with high % of THC.
- Cannabis Use Disorder. Some people who regularly use cannabis may find it hard to control their use and keep using even though it is negatively impacting on their lives. Close to 1 in 10 adult who ever use cannabis will develop a dependency.

Your health risks increase if you use cannabis regularly and over a long period of time.

Canada’s Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines:

- [General Brochure](#)
- [For Professionals](#)
- [Full Text Article](#)

[Clearing the Smoke on Cannabis: Regular Use and Mental Health \(CCSA\)](#)

Mental Health & Addictions Lending Library Resources:

[Cannabis & Your Health](#) – vinyl poster/display*

[Cannabis & Your Health](#) - Rack Cards*

[Cannabis: Inhaling vs Ingesting](#) - vinyl poster/display*

*Updated key message:

For health reasons, you should avoid: vaping liquid cannabis extracts/pods; and the use of illicit cannabis products & equipment.

To access visit:

www.westernhealth.nl.ca/mha

Or contact:

mha@westernhealth.nl.ca

<p>Cannabis Edibles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Buy safer. It is very difficult to gauge the amount of THC/CBD in homemade cannabis edibles (e.g., cookies), putting you at a higher risk for overconsumption. Always purchase cannabis products from a licensed retailer. ○ Read the label. Edible products vary widely in their ingredients, including the amount of THC and CBD they contain. You should always read the label first, to understand the strength of each specific product and help you determine how much to consume. ○ The effects of cannabis edibles can be more intense than other methods of use, such as smoking or vaping. ○ It is safest to start with products that contain 2.5 mg of THC or less. ○ Packages can legally contain up to 10 mg of THC, so you may have to cut a product into smaller portions; small amounts can produce intense effects. ○ Wait before taking more. Have patience and wait to feel the full effects before having more: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● You will feel effects within 30 minutes to 2 hours of ingesting. ● Full effects can peak within 4 hours. ● Effects can last up to 12 hours after use; some effects can last up to 24 hours. ○ Overconsumption can result in severe symptoms that may require medical attention. 	<p>What you Need to Know if You Choose to Consume Cannabis (Health Canada)</p> <p>7 Things You Need to Know about Edible Cannabis (CCSA)</p> <p>Cannabis: Inhaling vs Ingesting (MHA Resource Lending Library)</p> <p>Edible Cannabis: Always Read the Label (CCSA)</p>
<p>Cannabis Extracts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cannabis extracts can have high levels of THC, up to 99% ○ Read the label & instructions carefully. Cannabis extracts vary in their THC/CBD concentration and in the way they are intended to be used. ○ Extracts can lead to intense intoxication quickly and can increase risk of over-intoxication. ○ Start low, go slow. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Vaping: For health reasons, you should avoid vaping liquid cannabis extracts. If you choose to vape, start with one or two puffs with 100 mg/g (10%) or less of THC. ● Edible extract: start with no more than 2.5 mg of THC and wait at least 4 hours before consuming more. ○ Using high-strength extracts increases your risk of developing a dependence to cannabis. 	<p>7 Things You Need to Know about Cannabis Extracts (CCSA)</p>
<p>Cannabis & Vaping (liquid cannabis extracts/pods)</p> <p>NOTE: the following key messages refers to vaping <u>liquid extracts/pods</u> that contain cannabis (i.e., THC/CBD); this <u>does not</u> include vaporizing dry cannabis flower purchased from a licensed retailer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “Vaping” refers to the use of an electronic device (e-cigarette, vape, vape-pen, etc.) with a heating element that, when activated, vaporizes a liquid so that the user of the device can inhale the vapor. The liquid, made for this purpose and commonly called an “e-liquid,” 	<p>Vaping Linked with Severe Lung Illnesses (CCSA)</p> <p>About Vaping (Government of Canada)</p> <p>Vaping: The Mechanics (Government of Canada)</p>

<p>contains solvents, additives, water, flavorings and diverse active ingredients, usually liquid nicotine or cannabinoids, such as THC and CBD, suspended in oils.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For health reasons, people should avoid vape. ○ People who do vape should avoid doing so until there is more conclusive evidence of a specific agent causing the illness. ○ People who vape should not buy any e-cigarettes or vaping products from the illicit market. Products obtained from the illegal market are not subject to any controls or oversight and may pose additional risks to your health and safety. ○ The short- and long-term health effects of vaping and vaping products are unknown. ○ People who vape, or have used vaping products in the past, should closely monitor themselves and seek medical attention for any symptoms of pulmonary illness (e.g., cough, shortness of breath, chest pain, nausea, diarrhea or vomiting). Indicate to your health care professional that you currently vape, or have in the past, and what you were vaping. ○ Do not modify vaping products or add any substances to these products that are not intended by the manufacturer. 	<p>The Mechanics of Vaping – Video (Government of Canada)</p>
<p>Cannabis Use and Driving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Impaired driving is 100% preventable. ○ Cannabis impaired driving can result in injury or death for you, your passengers and others. Cannabis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● impairs your judgement ● affects your ability to react ● increases your chances of being in a crash ○ When using cannabis, it is important to wait at least 6 hours before driving or operating a motorized vehicle (e.g., quad, snowmobile, etc.) ○ Mixing cannabis with nicotine, alcohol or other drugs increases your level of impairment and leads to an even greater risk of an accident. ○ Driving while impaired by cannabis is illegal in Canada-- you could face legal consequences. 	<p>Don't Drive High (Government of Canada)</p> <p>Driving High is Driving Impaired (CAA)</p> <p>Cannabis In Canada: Impaired Driving (Government of Canada)</p> <p>Clearing the Smoke on Cannabis: Cannabis Use and Driving-An Update (CCSA)</p> <p>Impaired Driving Laws (Department of Justice)</p>
<p>Cannabis Use & Dependence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It can become hard to stop. Close to 1 in 10 adults who have ever used cannabis will develop a dependency. Limit your use, such as once a week or only during weekends. ○ The risk of dependence is higher in people who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Start using marijuana when they're young. ● Use it every day or use high-strength products. ● Have mental health problems. ○ People who use cannabis often and then quit may have withdrawal symptoms. These include anxiety, trouble sleeping, and intense cravings for the substance. ○ If you would like to seek help for a loved one's or your own cannabis use, talk to a healthcare provider, or contact your local mental health and addictions office. 	<p>CANNABIS EVIDENCE BRIEF: Is cannabis addictive? (Government of Canada)</p>

<p>Medical Cannabis Use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ While cannabis is used by some people for their health problems, determining whether cannabis is appropriate to treat your symptoms is best done through a discussion with a healthcare provider. ○ Using non-medical cannabis to manage a physical or mental health concern can be harmful. If you are self-medicating with non-medical cannabis, talk to a healthcare provider to determine the best possible care plan for you. ○ While anyone over the age of 19 may purchase non-medical cannabis through Licensed Cannabis Retailers and online, medical cannabis patients are encouraged to follow the advice of their healthcare professionals and receive products through their existing medical channels 	<p>Medical Use of Cannabis (Government of Canada)</p> <p>Accessing Cannabis for Medical Purposes (Government of Canada)</p>
<p>Legalization in Newfoundland & Labrador</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cannabis was legalized in Canada on October 17th, 2018. ○ The legal age to purchase, use and possess Cannabis in Newfoundland and Labrador is 19. ○ Products available for purchase includes cannabis flowers, plants, seeds, oils, edibles, topicals, & extracts. ○ Always purchase cannabis products from a licensed retailer, whether from a local store or online at ShopCannabisNL. 	<p>Cannabis in Newfoundland and Labrador (Government of NL)</p> <p>Cannabis NL (Newfoundland & Labrador Liquor Corporation)</p> <p>Cannabis is Canada: What You Need to Know (Government of Canada)</p>

Youth & Emerging Adults

Key Messaging	Resources
<p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Delay or minimize cannabis use as long and as much as possible. Your brain is still developing. ○ Using cannabis regularly may lead to long-term problems with memory, cognition and attention. It may also affect your ability to think and make decisions in all aspects of your life including school, recreational activities and relationships. ○ Start low, go slow: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Choose products lower in THC. ● Know your limit & stick to it. ● With edibles, start with small amounts and wait to feel the full effects before eating more to avoid overconsumption. ○ Stick to one. Mixing cannabis with nicotine, alcohol, or other substances will increase impairment and is risky. ○ Don't drive after using cannabis. Plan alternative options to get home or sleep at a friend's house. ○ Choose safer methods. There are different ways of using cannabis and some are safer than others: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Smoking cannabis causes harm. If you choose to smoke cannabis, avoid inhaling deeply or holding your breath. ● For health reasons, you should avoid: vaping liquid cannabis extracts/pods; and the use of illicit cannabis products & equipment. 	<p>Talking Pot with Youth: A Cannabis Communication Guide for Youth Allies (CCSA)</p> <p>What's With Weed? – Youth Website</p> <p>The High Way Home? - Interactive Youth Website (CCSA)</p> <p>Canada's Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Youth Brochure ○ General Brochure ○ For Professionals <p>Don't Drive High (Government of Canada)</p> <p>CANNABIS EVIDENCE BRIEF: Is cannabis safe to use? Facts for youth aged 13-17 years. (Government of Canada)</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Always use cannabis products & equipment from a licensed retailer. Synthetic cannabis products (i.e., K2, Spice) are dangerous and can cause serious health problems. ○ Limit and reduce how often you use cannabis. Try to take breaks or “days off” from cannabis use to reduce the long-term impacts on your health. ○ Know when to call for help. If you ever experience severe symptoms from cannabis, such as panic, confusion, shaking, shortness of breath, and/or vomiting, seek medical help right away. ○ If you need more information or support, talk to your doctor or a trusted adult. 	<p>CANNABIS EVIDENCE BRIEF: Is cannabis safe to use? Facts for youth aged 18-25 years. (Government of Canada)</p> <p>CANNABIS EVIDENCE BRIEF: Is cannabis addictive? (Government of Canada)</p>
<p>Cannabis Use & Dependence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Some people who regularly use cannabis become dependent on it and find it hard to quit. This means that they keep using cannabis even though it's having harmful effects. ○ When you are a teen or young adult and your brain is still developing, you are more likely to become dependent to cannabis. ○ Cannabis dependence can have negative effects on how you study, work and hang out with your friends. ○ If you are concerned about your cannabis use, talk to a trusted adult and learn ways that can help you avoid becoming addicted. 	
<p>Parents & Caregivers of Youth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Start the conversation about cannabis early, talk often and be open. ○ Parents who provide their kids with balanced information about the effects associated with cannabis (often called marijuana) can help them make informed decisions. ○ Parents play a vital role in teaching young people to drive responsibly. That means teaching them not to drive impaired. ○ Look for opportunities to start the conversation. ○ Set a good example. Demonstrate responsible, healthy decisions with your own cannabis & substance use. 	<p>Cannabis: What Parents/Guardians and Caregivers Need to Know (camh)</p> <p>Cannabis Talk Kit: Know how to talk with your teen (Drug Free Kids Canada)</p> <p>Test Run the Cannabis Talk (Drug Free Kids Canada)</p> <p>Talking with Teens about Drugs (Government of Canada)</p> <p>Marijuana: What parents need to know (Canadian Pediatric Society)</p>

Maternal: preconception, pregnancy, & breastfeeding

Key Messaging	Resources
<p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is no known safe amount of cannabis use during pregnancy or breastfeeding. The safest approach is to not use cannabis. ○ Cannabis smoke contains many of the same harmful chemicals as tobacco smoke. ○ If you are using cannabis or cannabis products for medical purposes, talk to your healthcare provider about safer alternatives during pregnancy and breastfeeding. 	<p>Thinking about using cannabis before or during pregnancy? (Health Canada)</p> <p>Pregnancy Info (The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada)</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It is important to tell your healthcare provider if you and/or your partner are using cannabis and you want to become pregnant, you are pregnant, or breastfeeding. 	<p>Thinking about using cannabis while parenting? (Health Canada)</p>
<p>Preconception</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Using cannabis may harm the fertility of both men and women and decrease the ability to become pregnant. 	<p>Clearing the Smoke on Cannabis: Maternal Cannabis Use during Pregnancy – An Update (CCSA)</p>
<p>During Pregnancy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is no known safe amount of cannabis use during pregnancy. The safest approach is to not use cannabis. ○ Cannabis is not recommended to treat morning sickness or for medical purposes during pregnancy. Ask a healthcare provider about safer options to feel better. ○ Using cannabis during your pregnancy may result in your baby having a lower birth weight. ○ Use of cannabis during pregnancy may affect a child’s brain development, behaviour and mental health into adolescence and early adulthood. The effects may be permanent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● problems understanding, learning, remembering or succeeding at school ● hyperactivity, inattentiveness or impulsivity ● increased risk of depression or anxiety 	<p>Risks of Cannabis on Fertility, Pregnancy, Breastfeeding and Parenting (Best Start Resource Centre)</p> <p>Canada’s Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ General Brochure ○ For Professionals ○ Full Text Article <p>CANNABIS EVIDENCE BRIEF: Is cannabis safe during preconception, pregnancy and breastfeeding? (Government of Canada)</p>
<p>Breastfeeding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is no known safe amount of cannabis use while breastfeeding. The safest approach is to not use cannabis. ○ Talk to your health care provider about breastfeeding. Cannabis passes into the breast milk. It can be stored in your baby’s fat cells and brain for weeks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Breastfeeding is the healthiest choice for your baby. ● If you are unable to stop using cannabis completely, try using less, and less often. ● Babies who have been exposed to cannabis through breast milk may become drowsy and have a hard time latching properly. ○ If you need help to reduce or to stop cannabis use, ask your healthcare provider about support and services in your area. 	

Workplace

Key Messaging	Resources
<p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cannabis is considered an intoxicating substance, similar to alcohol or prescription medication that results in impairment. ○ According to section 26(2) of the Newfoundland and Labrador Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 2012: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “An employer, supervisor or worker shall not enter or remain on the premises of a workplace or at a job site while his or her ability to perform work responsibilities is impaired by 	<p>Cannabis in the Workplace (Government of NL)</p> <p>Cannabis In Canada: Workplace Impairment (Government of Canada)</p>

<p>intoxicating substances or another cause that endangers his or her health or safety or that of other workers.”</p>	<p>Impairment (Canadian Centre for Occupational Health & Safety)</p>
<p>Medical Cannabis Use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Canadian Centre for Occupational Health & Safety: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When an employee claims a medical need for cannabis, the request should be treated in the same manner as any other request for accommodation involving a prescribed medication. 	<p>Western Health Policies:</p> <p>Western Health Policy #2-03-20: Staff Drug and Alcohol Use While Working, Performing Standby Duty, or Attending Organizational Sponsored Events</p> <p>Western Health Policy #15-03-430: Medical Cannabis: Patient/resident</p>

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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