

Cannabis Harm Reduction: Risks

General / Adults



- **Smoking is the most harmful way to use cannabis for the lungs** and increases the risks for respiratory concerns.
- **Cannabis can impair coordination** and ability to drive safely or operate equipment.
- **Correlations between cannabis use and mental health** consequences is moderate to significant.
- **Cardiovascular and pulmonary risks:** using smoked cannabis could lead to elevated risks of stroke or adverse events.
- **Possible drug interactions:** cannabis can interact with medications.
- **Reproductive risks in males:** poor sperm morphology and quality; lower sperm count; higher rates of erectile dysfunction. Men's cannabis use during conception may negatively affect the fetus and the child, though research is ongoing.
- **Parents:** Reduced ability to pay attention and react quickly, affecting one's ability to parent.
- **Risk of accidental ingestion by children:** keep edibles locked in a place out of reach of children.

Cannabis Harm Reduction: Risks Teens



- **Smoking is the most harmful way to use cannabis for the lungs and increases the risks for respiratory concerns.**
- **The developing brain is vulnerable to negative impacts.**
- **Cognitive functioning and development are negatively impacted.**
- **Impaired coordination, decision-making, reaction times, memory, attention and learning.** While teens may not be driving, many do still use scooters, bikes, and skateboards.
- **Possible drug interactions:** Teens who are relatively new to taking medications, may not know that cannabis can interact with them.

Cannabis Harm Reduction: Risks

Older Adults (50+)



- **Lower gait velocity (slower walk) and impaired motor skills increases the risks of falls and injuries.**
- **Smoking cannabis can have effects on the cardiovascular and pulmonary systems.**
- **The correlation between cannabis use and mental health consequences is moderate to significant.**
- **Changes in body fat and muscle mass as one ages may affect how cannabis is processed by the body.**
- **Cannabis use may have possible drug interactions with medications a person may be taking.**

Cannabis Harm Reduction: Risks Pregnant People



- **Reproductive risks:** cannabis use may disrupt reproductive events, including hormone levels, (estrogen and progesterone) and the menstrual cycle.
- **Risks to fetal development:** cannabis high in THC may lead to low birth weight, preterm birth, and effect development.
- **Breast feeding:** There is growing but insufficient evidence for an association between cannabis use during lactation and health outcomes for the infant. The safest option is to not use cannabis during lactation due to potential risks.
- **Parents:** Reduced ability to pay attention and react quickly, affecting one's ability to parent.
- **Risk of additional ingestion by children:** keep edibles in a place out of reach and locked up as children may mistake them for regular food.

