

Responsible Adult Cannabis Consumption



Pursuant to Virginia Code Section 4.1-604.32, the Virginia Cannabis Control Authority (“CCA”) has prepared this informational resource on responsible adult cannabis consumption. The CCA does not endorse the consumption of recreational cannabis.

The CCA encourages those individuals who wish to explore cannabis consumption to do so in a manner that protects personal well-being and public health and safety. Ways in which adults 21 and older can be responsible when using cannabis include the following:

THC
(Delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol)

THC stands for delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol. It is a cannabinoid molecule in cannabis that is recognized as the main psychoactive ingredient.

Knowing Product Types

Cannabis can appear as several product types, including concentrates, edibles, flower, and tinctures. Consumers should be aware of differences among products.



CONCENTRATES

- Highly concentrated cannabinoid extracts (i.e., hash oil, shatter, wax, cartridges)
- How they enter the body: inhalation
- Start of effects: immediate
- Length of effects: up to 6 hours



EDIBLES

- Food items made with cannabis or oils (i.e., baked goods, candies, beverages)
- How they enter the body: ingestion
- Start of effects: 30 minutes-2 hours
- Length of effects: up to 12 hours



FLOWER

- Cannabis in its natural form (i.e., bud, pre-rolls, blunts)
- How they enter the body: inhalation
- Start of effects: immediate
- Length of effects: up to 6 hours



TINCTURES

- Highly concentrated herbal extracts
- How they enter the body: ingestion or sublingually (absorbed under the tongue)
- Start of effects: 15 minutes-2 hours
- Length of effects: up to 8 hours

Measurements

The strength of cannabis products has minimal visual cues. Small differences in cannabis consumption can translate to substantial differences in symptoms. Cannabis products can present servings in measures of milligrams (e.g., THC 10mg), milliliters (e.g., THC 10 mg/ml), or percentages (e.g., THC 1% or 10mg/gram). Read product labels to learn the total THC content in a product. One serving does not always equal the total amount of product available in a package.

Cannabis-Drug Interactions

It is important to be aware of how cannabis can potentially interact with other drugs and medications. Using cannabis in combination with stimulants (i.e., amphetamine, meth, ecstasy) can lead to increased heart rate or high blood pressure, whereas using cannabis with depressants (i.e., alcohol or opioids) could produce drowsiness or loss of muscle control. Consult with a doctor before using cannabis with another drug or medication.

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Do Not Use Cannabis When...

PREGNANT OR BREASTFEEDING

People who use cannabis while pregnant or breastfeeding put themselves at risk of pregnancy complications and put their baby at risk of poor development. Consult a doctor for safe alternatives to cannabis use if pregnant, intending to become pregnant, or breastfeeding. For more information on cannabis and pregnancy, read the CCA's factsheet: [Cannabis and Pregnancy](#).

AROUND THOSE UNDER 21

Cannabis use is illegal for those under 21 years of age. Youth who are exposed to THC through direct or secondhand cannabis use may experience negative health effects, such as harm to the developing brain.

IN PUBLIC

Using cannabis products in public places in Virginia is illegal. Avoid smoking cannabis around other people to limit their exposure to secondhand smoke.

DRIVING OR INTENDING TO DRIVE

Driving under the influence of cannabis is illegal and unsafe. The safest option for those who intend to drive is to not use cannabis or other drugs. Other steps individuals can take to help prevent impaired driving when using cannabis include:



- Select a designated driver who will remain sober.
- Call a taxi or rideshare service.
- Discourage friends and family from driving immediately after cannabis consumption.



Know Your Limits

If choosing to use cannabis, do so in moderation. Start with a low THC level and wait a considerable amount of time before consuming more. A person's reaction to cannabis can depend on several factors, including:

- Method of consumption
- Amount of THC consumed
- Age
- Gender
- Previous experience with cannabis use

Conduct Research

Cannabis consumers should remain informed and make educated decisions about cannabis use by knowing various product types and strains of cannabis, as well as the THC content per serving. Be sure to stay up to date on current state and federal laws regarding cannabis use to remain legally compliant in Virginia and when traveling outside of the state.