



# CANNABIS AND HEART DISEASE

## INTRODUCTION

Was there anything in yesterday’s teaching that you did not understand or was not clear? If yes, write down your question(s) to ask the doctor or nurse on your next visit.

My question(s):	Reason why I am asking:

## CANNABIS

Cannabis is a product of the cannabis sativa plant used for its psychoactive and therapeutic effects. It comes in many forms, such as dried flowers; hash; oil (e.g., honey oil, phoenix tears) and edibles (e.g., candies or baked goods). Cannabis contains more than 100 chemicals called cannabinoids. THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) is the main psychoactive cannabinoid and is mostly responsible for the “high” associated with cannabis use. Another cannabinoid is cannabidiol (CBD). CBD has little or no psychoactive effects, however. CBD counteracts some of the negative effects of THC.

## HEART DISEASE’S RELATIONSHIP WITH CANNABIS

Further research is needed to understand the short- and long-term effects on the heart. To date, there have been no studies showing the benefits of using cannabis to help with conditions such as high blood pressure, heart failure, arrhythmias, or recovery after a heart attack or stroke.

## RISKS OF CANNABIS USE

Smoking cannabis when you have heart disease or have had a heart attack can be risky to your health. In fact, Cannabis smoking increases heart rate and blood pressure right after you have smoked and can last up to 2 to 3 hours which can be dangerous for those who have heart disease. When smoking cannabis, people tend to inhale larger puffs and hold their breath for longer period compared to smoking cigarettes. This can lead to more chemicals entering your system. This may increase your risk for having a heart attack while smoking or

shortly after smoking. This can be especially dangerous to people who have current conditions like angina.

## CANNABIS AND YOUR HEART MEDICATIONS

The active components in cannabis (THC and CBD) may interact with medications you are currently taking for your heart. Although cannabis is from a plant, the components in cannabis can still interact with these medications. Cannabis may interact with many heart medications such as “statin” medications, antiplatelet medications such as clopidogrel, anti-arrhythmic medications, beta-blockers, calcium-channel blockers, warfarin, and NSAIDs like Advil or Tylenol.

## MYTHS ABOUT CANNABIS USE

1. Cannabis is not addictive – **False**, 1 in 11 users become dependant.
2. Everybody uses cannabis – **False**, only half of Manitobans have tried cannabis.
3. Holding it in your lungs makes the effects better – **False**, it can be more dangerous.
4. You cannot overdose on cannabis – **False**, you cannot die but you can have extreme reactions to using too much cannabis:
  - a. If this does happen seek immediate medical attention in case of overdose if you are experiencing chest pain, panic attacks or seizures.
  - b. For lesser symptoms, contact poison control at 1-855-776-4766, Health Links - Info Santé at 204-788-8200, or toll-free at 1-888-315-9257 for 24-hour advice.

## LET YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER KNOW

Using cannabis has its risks and potential side effects that can be harmful to you. Be informed, talk with your healthcare provider about the risks of using cannabis especially after a heart attack. Also, speak with you pharmacist to make sure that cannabis use does not create a dangerous interaction with your heart medications. Understand the warning about vaping THC products, particularly the risk of acute lung injury.

## TIPS TO REDUCE CANNABIS USE

- Stick to the limits you have set for yourself.
- Use less cannabis each time you decide to smoke, vape, or eat.
- Increase physical activity, moving more can help with reducing cannabis use.

## NEED HELP TO STOP USING CANNABIS?

Some people who use cannabis develop problems and may become dependent. Do not hesitate to get support if you think you need help controlling your cannabis use, if you experience withdrawal symptoms, or if your use is affecting your work, school, or social and family life. You can find help online, or through a doctor or other health professional:

- Manitoba Addiction: <http://mbaddictionhelp.ca/> or call 1-855-662-6605

## OTHER RESOURCES

Heart and Stroke:

- <https://www.heartandstroke.ca/heart-disease/risk-and-prevention/lifestyle-risk-factors/heavy-alcohol-use/cannabis-heart-disease-and-stroke>

Health Canada and Vaping:

- <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/smoking-tobacco/vaping.html>
- <https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/vaping-illness-update-fda-warns-public-stop-using-tetrahydrocannabinol-thc-containing-vaping>
- <https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/vaping-illness-update-fda-warns-public-stop-using-tetrahydrocannabinol-thc-containing-vaping>

## LEARN MORE

At the MB ACS Network website at: <https://mbacsnetwork.ca/education> or scan the QR Code:

