

CANNABIS 101



CANNABIS

Cannabis is a word commonly used to refer to a plant that produces flowers or buds that when dried and used, can affect a person's mind, body, and mood. The cannabis bud or flower is known by many names, including:

- weed
- pot
- dope
- bud
- marijuana
- Sikarelukak
- ujarak
- milutsi/miluksi
- surrarnaqtuq
- Aangajaarnaqtuq
- Sigaaqtluk/
Hikakluq

There are hundreds of compounds in the cannabis plant called cannabinoids. The two most common are:

- **Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC)** - the component in cannabis that makes you feel high.
- **Cannabidiol (CBD)** - the component that is thought to have medicinal benefits like treating pain, upset stomach, and swelling in the joints. Unlike THC, CBD does not make a person feel high.

In 2018, the Cannabis Act came into effect that legalized recreational cannabis use to provide a safer way to get and use cannabis products, protect the health and safety of youth, and reduce stigma around cannabis use.

CANNABIS PRODUCTS

Cannabis comes in different products that are used in different ways. The most common products include:

- **Cannabis flower (buds)** - Dried flower is often ground and smoked like a cigarette, called a joint, or can be smoked in a pipe or bong.
- **Edibles** - Products that have been made with cannabis and meant to be taken as a food or a drink. This includes items such as cookies, brownies, candies, teas and juices.
- **Extracts** - When the cannabis plant is refined to pull out the cannabinoids it is

called an extract. These can be smoked or vaped (shatter, budder, hash oils) or taken by mouth like edibles (oils, capsules, oral sprays). Some of these products can contain very high amounts of THC often called concentrates.

- **Topicals** - Cannabis can be added into creams, oils and lotions that are put onto the skin, nails, or hair. Topicals do not make a person high.

EFFECTS OF INHALING VS. EATING CANNABIS

- The way a person uses cannabis can change the effect they feel.
- Inhaling cannabis, by smoking or vaping, causes a person to feel the effects quickly and can last up to 6 hours.
- Eating or drinking cannabis (edibles, capsules, oils) can be felt within 30 minutes and can take up to 4 hours to feel the full effects. The effects of stronger edibles can be felt for 12-24 hours.

There's More To This Than Cannabis

Learn more at [LetsTalkAboutUjarak.com](https://www.LetsTalkAboutUjarak.com)



SHORT-TERM EFFECTS - PLEASANT

The effects of cannabis can change based on:

- The age of the person
- The amount used
- How often it is used
- The way it is taken
- Where it is taken (e.g. at home)

The pleasant short-term effects can include:

- Euphoria or a sense of well-being
- Relaxation
- Heightened sense of sight, taste, smell, and sound
- Focus and creativity
- Increased self-awareness
- Increased appetite
- Real or perceived pain relief



OTHER EFFECTS - UNPLEASANT

Cannabis can sometimes cause effects that are unpleasant or unwanted.

Effects on the brain:

- Sleepiness
- Confusion
- Difficulty with memory or concentration
- Slower reactions
- Anxiety
- Distorted sense of time
- Seeing and hearing things that are not real

Possible effects on the body:

- Damage to the blood vessels, lungs and heart from smoking cannabis
- Changes in blood pressure, which can cause fainting or potential problems for people with heart conditions

CANNABIS OVERCONSUMPTION

Overconsumption refers to too much of a drug taken at one time. While over consuming cannabis cannot kill you, using too much at a time can result in an unpleasant experience often referred to as “greening out” which can include:

- Severe anxiety
- Paranoia
- Fear or panic attack
- Severe nausea
- Vomiting

These effects are temporary and will go away after the cannabis has worn off.



POSSIBLE LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF CANNABIS

Long-term effects of cannabis can occur with use over time and can impact:

Brain Development

Long term and/ or heavy Cannabis use can affect a person’s memory, concentration, and ability to make decisions.

Dependency

It is possible to become dependent on cannabis. This is where a person can experience irritability, low appetite, and mood swings if they go without using cannabis. The risk of developing a dependency increases when cannabis is used with other addictive substances such as tobacco.

Respiratory Problems

Smoking cannabis has similar risks to smoking tobacco. Health risks can include breathing problems, a cough that will not go away, and

mucus build-up. These risks increase in cold temperatures and among those with existing respiratory challenges like Tuberculosis.

Mental Health

While some people find cannabis helps them with symptoms of mental illness or to cope with trauma, long term and heavy cannabis use has also been linked to depression, anxiety, and cannabis use disorder among some users.

If a person or their family has a history of mental illness, trauma, or schizophrenia, heavy cannabis use can increase the possibility of triggering an episode. This is where a person loses contact with reality and hears and sees things that are not real. These are more likely to occur if a person:

- Starts using cannabis at an early age
- Uses cannabis frequently over a long period of time (daily or near daily use)
- Uses concentrated cannabis products that are high in THC content (higher than 15% THC)
- Some people who use cannabis may see, hear, feel, or experience things that differ from other’s perception of reality. In Western medicine this experience is referred to as psychosis. This experience can be negative and unwanted or positive and spiritual depending on the intent of the user.



AVAILABLE SUPPORTS

For more information on cannabis and reducing possible harms related to its use, please visit: letstalkaboutujarak.com

