

D CANNABIS

Inhalation vs Ingestion - What happens in the body?

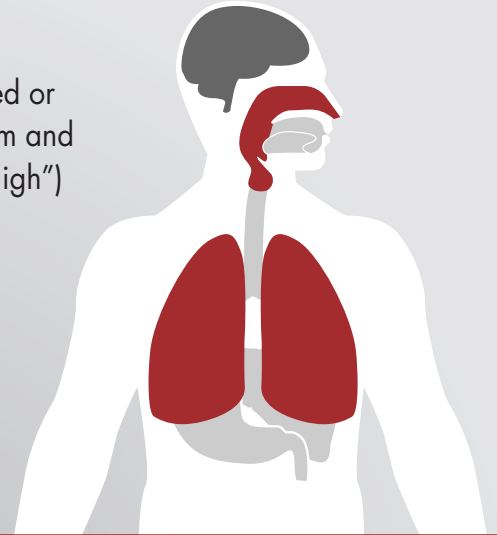
Cannabis can be inhaled or ingested – and there are significant differences in the way the effects of THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) are felt.

INHALED - Smoking or Vaping

When dried cannabis plant material or cannabis extracts are inhaled or vaped, THC is delivered directly to the lungs, enters the blood stream and travels to the brain where the euphoric or intoxicating effects (the “high”) are felt within minutes of inhaling.

It takes:

- A few seconds or minutes to start to feel some of the effects
- 30 minutes to feel the full effects
- 6 hours for some of the acute or immediate effects to subside
- Some residual effects can last up to 24 hours

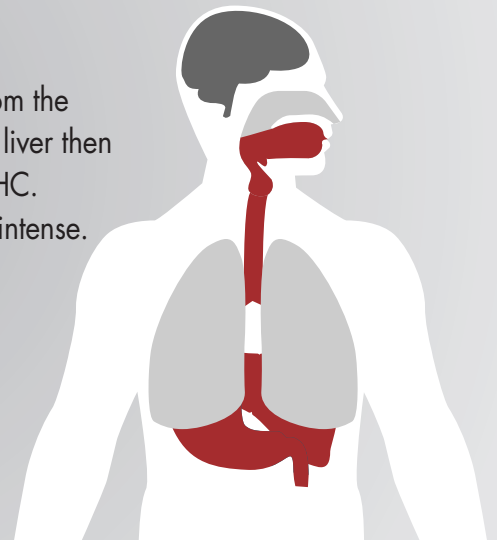


INGESTING - Eating or Drinking

When cannabis is ingested, its full effects are delayed. THC travels from the stomach to the liver before reaching your bloodstream and brain. The liver then converts some of the THC to a stronger chemical called 11-hydroxy-THC. When combined with the THC in the edible, the “high” may be more intense.

It takes:

- 30 minutes to 2 hours to start to feel some of the effects
- 4 hours to feel the full effects
- Up to 12 hours for acute effects to subside
- Some residual effects can last up to 24 hours



EDIBLE CANNABIS USE HAS A GREATER POTENTIAL FOR:

- Unexpected or unpredictable effects when compared with inhalation;
- Delayed effects may lead to people over-consuming because they don't feel the effect right away;
- Unintentional cannabis over-intoxication or poisoning (not fatal, but extremely uncomfortable, disorienting and could cause anxiety) when too much is consumed at one time;
- A child, pet or teenager taking it accidentally because these products look just like regular food products.

Whether or not you use cannabis yourself, as parents it's important to understand the differences between the inhalation and ingestion of cannabis - then have open, honest, and age appropriate conversations with your kids about cannabis.

WHAT TO SAY:

If your children are young:

Just as you would talk to your younger children about the risks of not wearing a helmet, running across the road, talking to strangers, or consuming anything unknown - cannabis can become a part of your general “safety” conversation.

Important to remember: *It's a regulatory requirement that cannabis products come in child-resistant, tamper-proof containers that are labelled and packaged in special packaging. However, once removed from packaging, edible cannabis can look just like the cookies or chocolate you buy at the grocery store - which can be very attractive to young children. If you have made your own edible cannabis products, don't leave them in plain sight, label them properly in child-resistant containers and securely store all cannabis products safely out of reach.*

If your children are teens:

Chances are your kids already have many questions about cannabis. Together, you and your teen can learn more about cannabis products by using reliable sources like: [Drug Free Kids Canada](#), the [Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction](#) and [Health Canada](#). Help teens understand that the best way for them to protect their health is not to use cannabis at all.

Important: *Cannabis in all its forms is an addictive substance. Adolescents who start consuming cannabis frequently have a much higher risk of developing cannabis use disorder.*

If your children are age of majority or young adults:

Remind them that every form of cannabis can be a risk to their health – and that the best way to avoid those risks is not to use at all. One of the biggest mistakes made with first time use of edible cannabis is to accidentally consume too much and then consequently experience a stronger, unpleasant and unintended high.

Important: *If they make the choice to use cannabis, remind them that the exact same dose can affect two people differently - so people experimenting or using for the first time **Start Low, Go Slow.***

- **With edible cannabis**, start with a low dose of THC (2.5 mg) and wait at least four hours before consuming any more.
- For first time use of inhaled cannabis products, start with less than 10% THC and wait at least 30 minutes before inhaling more.
- If they are new to cannabis, dabbing and the use of high potency cannabis extracts should be avoided completely. [Find out more about cannabis extracts here.](#)

Get to know [Canada's Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines](#), as well as the [Youth version of these guidelines](#), and discuss them together with your kids. **Early and regular cannabis use does affect the health of youth. These recommendations can greatly help reduce the potential harms of cannabis use to the health of youth and young adults.**

Important things to keep in mind:

- Always store cannabis products securely in order to protect children and pets. Pay particular attention to cannabis products that have been removed from the regulation packaging and home made edible cannabis products. All cannabis products should be labelled and locked away safely out of reach in child resistant containers.
- Don't mix substances – Avoid mixing edible cannabis with other substances like alcohol, illegal drugs, over the counter or prescription drugs, as they can have an additive effect.
- Always purchase from a licensed retailer in your **province or territory** – Products purchased through legally authorized retailers must conform to federal regulations regarding product quality, including having to report the amounts of THC and CBD in the product and ensuring the product is not contaminated.
- Like alcohol, cannabis impairs driving – Cannabis can affect concentration, coordination and reaction time. Using cannabis before or during driving increases the risk of having a collision or crash. Remind your kids to never operate a car or ANY motorized vehicle, including ATV's, boats and snowmobiles, after consuming cannabis, or get into a vehicle driven by someone who has used cannabis or any other drug.