

Cannabis and You



Somerset
Council

Cannabis

Cannabis is a drug which comes from the Cannabis plant. How the drug affects you will depend on how you feel before you take it, how much you take, where you are, and who you are with. Cannabis is made of two main parts: Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and Cannabidiol (CBD).

THC

THC makes the feeling often described as "being high". Short-term effects may include altered senses, mood changes, issues with thinking, confusion, slow reaction times, increased heart rate, and dizziness.

CBD

CBD does not make you "high." Short-term effects may be drowsiness, agitation, and irritability. Currently research is exploring potential benefits of CBD, including its anti-inflammatory, anti-anxiety, and antiepileptic properties. There isn't enough research yet, especially long-term. A big concern with CBD products is that they are not regulated, which means you don't know what you are buying. Sometimes products that claim to be 'CBD', contain many other chemicals and no CBD.



The Effects

Cannabis affects people in different ways. It depends on how you feel, how much you smoke and where and who you are with. When smoked the effects are felt quite quickly. They can range from feeling relaxed, happy and laid back to feeling wired and paranoid.

Risk

The strength of cannabis has risen significantly as a result of selective breeding, advanced cultivation methods and an increasing demand for high-potency products. Cannabis is more dangerous than it used to be and more people are entering treatment for cannabis use problems. Cannabis is linked to a higher risk of memory impairment, heightened anxiety, mental health disorders, dependence and addiction, cardiovascular issues, and withdrawal symptoms.

Method

There are several methods for consuming cannabis.

Smoke it, “Joints”

Cannabis is usually smoked in a cigarette, “Joint” (“Spliff”, “Doobie”, “Blunt”), normally rolled with tobacco or by using a pipe or bong.

- It is commonly believed that smoking cannabis carries fewer health risks compared to smoking cigarettes. Although cannabis may be less likely to cause cancer than tobacco, it still presents specific health hazards.
- Cannabis is often consumed with tobacco, which is linked to many health risks such as cancer and heart disease. Additionally, the nicotine present in tobacco is highly addictive.

Eat it, “Edibles”

Sometimes people will eat cannabis, mixed with other ingredients, e.g. in biscuits or cakes.

- Eating cannabis can make it take longer to feel the effects. This means there is a risk of overconsumption, as individuals may eat more before feeling the effects.
- It can be difficult to measure the amount of THC in edibles, leading to accidental overdoses.
- There is a risk someone may eat it accidentally, which may result in significant health issues especially in children.
- The ingredients of the edible may also contain unknown substances that could be more harmful.
- The effects of edibles can last much longer than smoking, potentially leading to prolonged impairment.

Long-term use and dependency

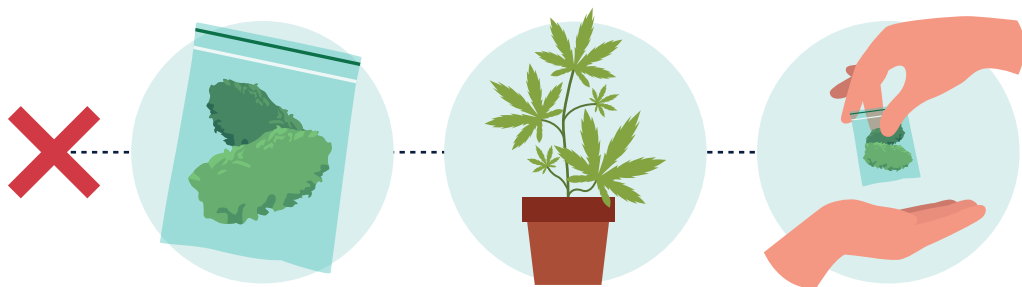
Cannabis is now being linked to a higher risk of memory problems, anxiety, mental health disorders, heart problems and withdrawal symptoms. People using cannabis every day over a long time may get used to the effects and might need larger amounts to achieve the desired outcomes or become dependent.

The Law

Under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, cannabis is a Class B drug in the UK.

This means possession, growing it and supply of the drug are all illegal in the UK.

While the possession of small amounts of cannabis may result in a warning or on-the-spot fine, repeat offenses or possession of larger quantities can lead to more severe punishments.



Drug Driving

Like alcohol, it is illegal to drive whilst under the influence of cannabis. If you test positive, you'll face a driving ban, a large fine, or even imprisonment. If you're under 18, the police are allowed to tell your parents or carers.

If you're concerned about cannabis use, either yourself or someone else, you can contact **Somerset Drug & Alcohol Service (SDAS)** directly by phoning **0300 303 8788**



Adults, children and families impacted by their own or another person's use of alcohol and other drugs can receive free, support and treatment in Somerset from Somerset Drug & Alcohol Service (SDAS).