

CANNABIS

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

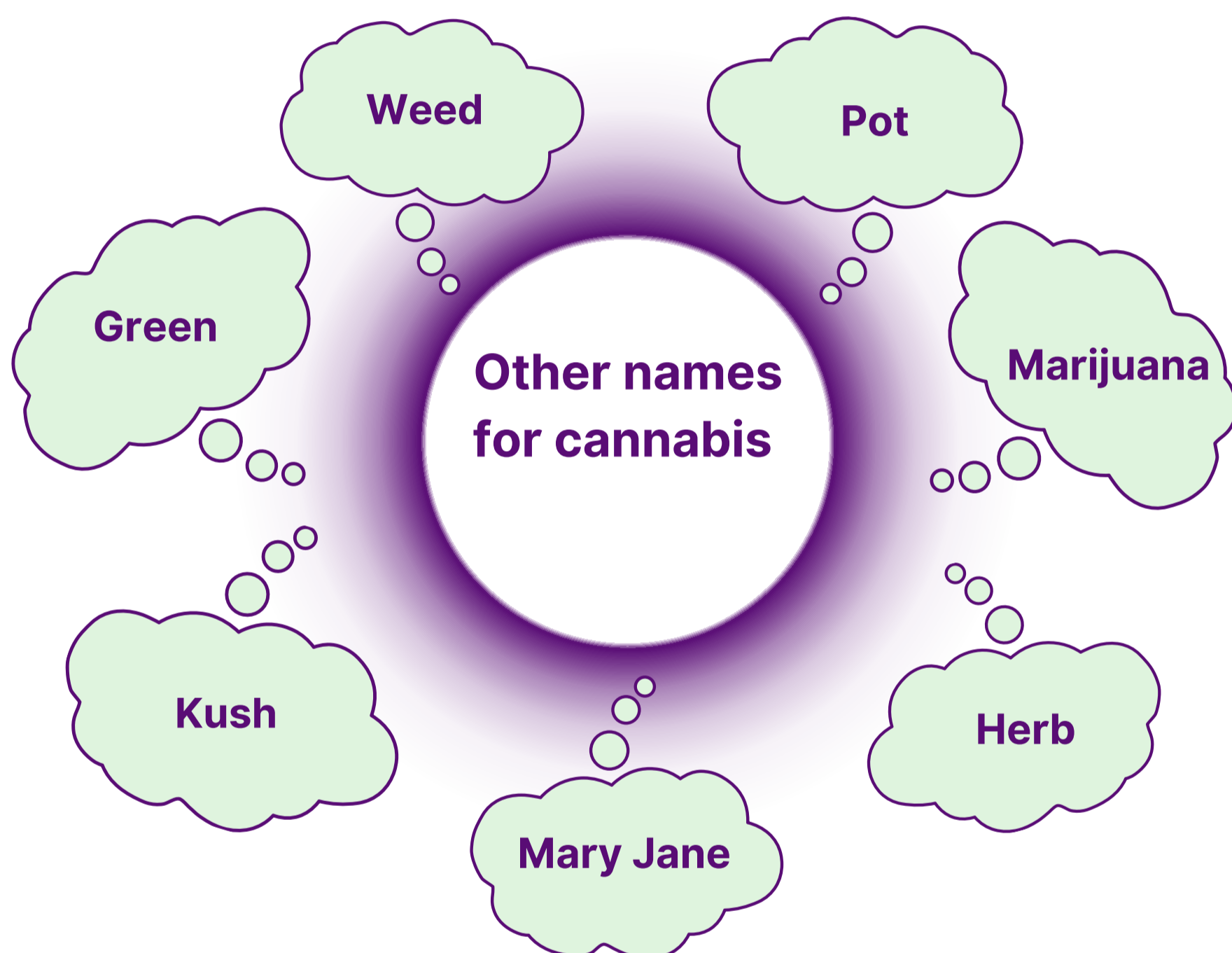
What is it?

Cannabis can be psychoactive



Cannabis is a complex plant that contains several components. The main chemicals are THC (psychoactive) and CBD (calming). Cannabis can be stimulating, hallucinogenic, or cause drowsiness. It can be used for its psychoactive properties but also may be used for medical reasons (e.g., pain). Cannabis comes as a dried flower, concentrated oil/wax, capsules, tablets, or mixed in food or drinks.

For information on different types of cannabis, check out our cannabinoids page: decyde.ca/substance-snapshots/substance-snapshots/#cannabinoids



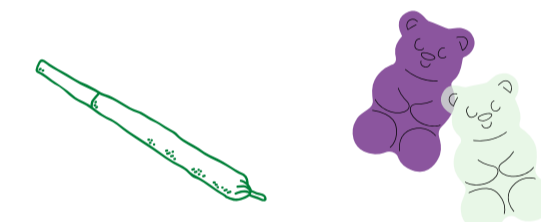
How is it used?

Oral:

Edibles (e.g. gummies, drinks, chocolates)
Capsules, tablets, oils

Inhaled:

Vape, smoke, dab



THC: The main psychoactive chemical in cannabis. It causes the 'high'.

CBD: The non-intoxicating component that may have some calming effect.

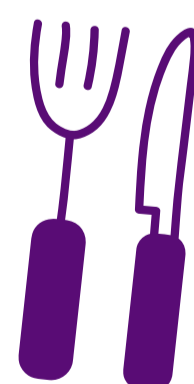
What are the effects?



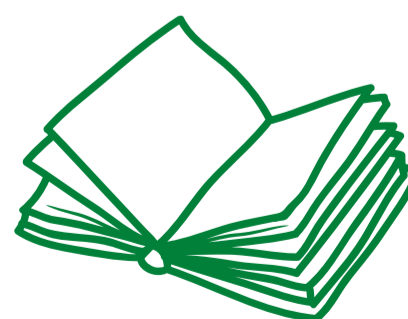
The effects of cannabis depend many factors, like mood, food intake, the amount of THC, taking other drugs, and tolerance.

THC may make you more talkative. However, it can also cause panic and paranoia.

THC may causes senses to be felt differently, such as taste, touch, and hearing.



Cannabis may increase your appetite and make you feel sleepy. In rare cases, it can cause severe nausea and vomiting.

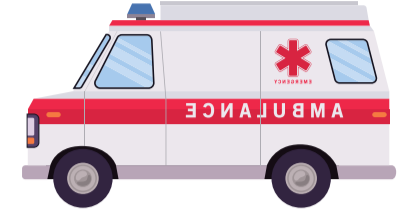


Regular use may lead to dependence and addiction. It may be hard to stop using cannabis, even if you know it's negatively affecting you.



Regular cannabis use may worsen symptoms for individuals with mental health disorders or a family history of such conditions.

When do you seek emergency help?



“Greening out:” A term given to cannabis overdose or poisoning (taking too much cannabis).

Signs: Signs of taking too much cannabis include intense anxiety, panic, dizziness, intense nausea or vomiting. Additionally, some individuals may experience shortness of breath, rapid heartbeat, chest pain, or hallucinations.

Get help right away! Cannabis overdoses or poisonings can be very distressing and lead to serious injury.

Did you know?

Compared to legal cannabis, illegal cannabis is not quality controlled! The amount of CBD and THC is often incorrect or misleading.

There also may be other substances (e.g. ketamine, fentanyl) added.



How to stay safer?



Not using cannabis is the best way to stay safer and avoid harms.

If you still decide to use cannabis, consider these harm reduction strategies:

- 1 **Timing matters:** Avoid using before school, work or driving, as it impairs concentration and reaction time.
- 2 **Avoid synthetic!** Synthetic cannabis is unregulated and much more potent. It has a higher risk of dependence and dangerous side effects.
- 3 **Start low & go slow:** Try a small amount and wait to feel the full effects. Choose products with a lower amount of THC and an equal or higher amount of CBD.
- 4 **Moderate use:** Use in moderation to prevent brain fog and potential strain on relationships.
- 5 **Be mindful of inhalation:** Avoid inhaling smoke deeply or holding your breath, this can harm your lungs.
- 6 **Don't mix (Cross-Fading):** Mixing cannabis with tobacco, alcohol, or other substances will increase impairment and the risk of serious health effects.
- 7 **Don't use alone.** Always have a buddy with you, and check in with friends to make sure they get home safely. Share your location with someone you trust.
- 8 **Choose legal.** Get cannabis from a licensed store. Illegal and synthetic cannabis products (e.g., K2, Spice) may contain other substances such as fentanyl that can cause serious health problems such as accidental overdose or poisoning.

Characteristics of Legal Cannabis

- Displays a standard cannabis symbol
- Plain, child-resistant packaging
- Indicates the amount of THC and CBD
- Has a yellow box with a Health Canada warning in English and French
- Has a excise stamp representing the province/territory it's meant to be sold in



Learn more about ways you can stay safe when using cannabis: **Canada's lower-risk cannabis use guidelines**

For more information visit us at:

www.DECYDE.ca

Click here for a list of cannabis retailers in Newfoundland and Labrador.

These documents are intended to support educators in their delivery of drug education. They are not for direct student use unless deemed developmentally appropriate.