




Cannabis and Youth: Know the Facts

Cannabis (also known as marijuana, weed and pot) is legal for adult use in New York State (NYS). The effects of cannabis can be riskier for youth than adults. It is important to know what is legal and what effects cannabis can have on your health and community.

Legal Use of Cannabis

- Cannabis use is legal for adults age 21 and older. It can be legally purchased from NYS-licensed dispensaries.
- Using cannabis in a car is illegal, even among passengers or while parked.
 - It is dangerous to drive while under the influence of cannabis. Do not drive after using cannabis or ride with someone who has been using cannabis.



Frequently Asked Questions

I see many places that sell cannabis. Does that mean it is safe to use?

- Cannabis, whether sold legally or not, is not necessarily safe for everyone or in every situation.
- Many cannabis products sold in unlicensed shops are not regulated, so you cannot tell what is in them, how strong they are or if they even contain cannabis.
- Licensed dispensaries are issued an NYS verification seal with a QR code to hang in their window. This seal shows that the store can legally sell cannabis products.
- If a store has no NYS verification seal and is not listed on **cannabis.ny.gov/dispensing-facilities**, it is **not** a licensed dispensary and the products sold there are not regulated.
- Licensed dispensaries are not allowed to show cannabis on their storefronts.



What if my friends use cannabis?

- Have open conversations with your friends about:
 - Their cannabis use
 - How to use cannabis more safely. Different forms of cannabis have different effects, so start with a small amount and see how it feels before using more.

- ❑ Avoiding cannabis products from unlicensed shops
- Many people do not use cannabis. Even if others use it, it is OK to avoid using cannabis, wait to use cannabis, or reduce or stop your cannabis use to avoid harmful effects.

What can I do if I used too much cannabis or want help reducing my use?

- If you are experiencing unwanted effects from cannabis, talk to a trusted adult. Call **911** if you or someone else is experiencing a medical emergency. To ask about the effects of cannabis, call the NYC Poison Center at 212-POISONS (212-764-7667).
- People sometimes use cannabis to cope with stress or other mental health conditions, but there are resources that can help you cope in a healthy way:
 - ❑ For free, confidential crisis counseling, mental health and substance use support, and referrals to care, call or text 988 or chat at **nyc.gov/988**, anytime.
 - ❑ To sign up for NYC Teenspace and be paired with a Talkspace therapist for messaging and live virtual sessions just for teens, visit **talkspace.com/nyc**.

Effects of Cannabis

- Cannabis can:
 - Have harmful effects on young people, whose brains are still developing
 - Slow down your mind and body, affecting your schoolwork, participation in sports and other activities you enjoy
 - Cause depression and anxiety, and, in some people, increase the risk of conditions such as schizophrenia
 - Be harder to stop using the younger you start using it
- Using some forms of cannabis, such as vapes or joints, can affect your community.
 - Like tobacco, cannabis smoke and aerosols (mist) contain chemicals that can harm others. By avoiding these products, you can protect your heart, your lungs and the people around you.
 - Vapes add plastics and toxic batteries to the environment.



For additional information on safer use, health effects, your legal rights, New York's medical cannabis program and more, visit **nyc.gov/health/cannabis**.

