

# Is Your Marijuana Use a Problem?

## What to Know

The medical and recreational use of marijuana is now legal in many places and this trend is likely to continue. Some adults feel that using marijuana is preferable to drinking alcohol because it is less addictive and there are fewer risks to your physical health. However, marijuana use can be a problem for many people just like drinking. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) has a new category for when marijuana use should be considered a problem called Cannabis Use Disorder (CUD).

The checklist below outlines common symptoms of Cannabis Use Disorder. It can be used to assess the severity of the disorder, which can range from mild to severe, depending on the number of symptoms experienced. This assessment can help you identify the impact of cannabis use on your well-being and whether you should see professional help concerning your use of marijuana.

## What to Do

Check off the statements that apply to you. Be as honest as possible in your responses.

I need to use more cannabis to get the effect I want.

Using the same amount of cannabis no longer has the same effect as it used to.

When I try to stop or reduce my cannabis use, I experience withdrawal symptoms like irritability, anxiety, difficulty sleeping, or physical discomfort. I may also use cannabis to relieve these symptoms.

I have a strong craving or urge to use cannabis, and I often find myself thinking about it.

I often use cannabis in larger amounts or for a longer period than I originally intended.

I make persistent efforts to reduce or control my cannabis use, but I am unable to do so.

I spend a lot of time getting cannabis, using it, or recovering from its effects.

I fail to meet my responsibilities at work, school, or home because of my cannabis use.

I continue to use cannabis even though it causes problems in my relationships, like arguments with loved ones.

I have given up or reduced my participation in important social, work, or recreational activities because of cannabis use.

I use cannabis in physically dangerous situations, such as while driving or operating machinery.

I continue to use cannabis even though I know it's causing or worsening physical or psychological problems (e.g., lung issues, depression).

Now add up the number of statements you checked off.

\_\_\_\_\_ Total

The number of statements checked off indicates the severity of Cannabis Use Disorder:

- Mild (2-3 symptoms)
- Moderate (4-5 symptoms)
- Severe (6 or more symptoms)

Next, answer the following questions.

How do you feel about the score you received on the Cannabis Use Disorder assessment? Does this score align with your perception of your cannabis use, or is it surprising? Explain.

---

---

---

How do you think your cannabis use is currently affecting your daily life, including your relationships, responsibilities, and overall well-being? Are there specific areas of your life (e.g., work, school, social life) where you feel your cannabis use has had the most noticeable impact?

---

---

---

Based on your score, how motivated are you to make changes to your cannabis use? What would you say are your main reasons for wanting to reduce or quit cannabis, if any?

---

---

---

What challenges or barriers do you foresee in trying to reduce or quit using cannabis? Have you attempted to cut down or quit in the past? If so, what worked and what didn't?

---

---

---

What, if any, steps would you like to take next regarding your cannabis use?

---

---

---

Who in your life could support you as you navigate any changes you want to make? Are there any people or resources you feel you would need to help you succeed in reducing or quitting cannabis?

---

---

---

Is there anything else you would like to share?

**Reference:**

Connor JP, Stjepanović D, Le Foll B, Hoch E, Budney AJ, Hall WD. (2021). Cannabis use and cannabis use disorder. *Nat Rev Dis Primers*, 7(1):16. Retrieved from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8655458/>