

Wellness Articles

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If you would like to be added to the distribution list for these articles, please email: Rebecca.johnson2@albertahealthservices.ca. You will receive a monthly email containing articles for the upcoming four weeks.

An archive of past wellness articles is available at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/9966.asp>

Proposed publication date: July 26, 2021
Content provided by: Alberta Health Services

What you need to know about edible cannabis

Edible cannabis products (edibles for short) are products containing cannabinoids that you eat or drink. Cannabinoids are chemical compounds found in cannabis that can affect your mind and body when consumed.

Safe storage

Edibles are deceiving as they may appear to look like everyday food items such as baked goods or candy. It is important to keep edible cannabis out of reach from children, animals, and anyone who should not have access to the products. Ensure that your edibles are:

- Properly labelled.
- Stored in child-resistant containers and resealed after use.
- Stored out of sight and reach of children and pets.

Read the label

All edibles are not made the same. It is important to read the label and ingredients. Make sure you:

- Read the instructions for use.
- Understand the amount of THC and CBD that each edible contains.
- Check the expiry dates.
- Check the ingredients to prevent allergic reactions.
- Be patient. Wait to feel the effects before taking more.

Understand the differences between inhaling and ingesting cannabis

If you consume cannabis, you will notice it affects you differently than smoking or vaping cannabis products. It is important to understand that:

- Your body requires a longer amount of time to absorb the THC from edibles compared to inhaling cannabis.
- The effects of cannabis last longer when ingesting edibles and may last 12 to 24 hours after consuming.
- Edibles can be more intense than smoking or vaping cannabis.
- Seek medical attention or contact Poison and Drug Information Service (PADIS) if you are not feeling well or if you consumed too much cannabis.
- The effects of consuming cannabis do not kick in immediately. Usually, the effects begin after 30 minutes to two hours after consumption and peak around four hours. When vaping or smoking cannabis, the effects usually kick in within a few seconds or minutes and will peak around 30 minutes.
- Avoid using cannabis daily and consume products with lower levels of THC as overconsumption can affect your physical and mental health.
- Do not drive or operate heavy equipment after using cannabis.

Do not mix alcohol or other substances with cannabis

Consuming other substances or alcohol with cannabis can be dangerous because it increases the effects of cannabis. Mixing substances can cause serious health issues. Remember to:

- Choose between alcohol or cannabis, but not both.
- Do not mix other substances with cannabis such as nicotine or other drugs.
- Speak with a healthcare practitioner if you are using prescription medications and are planning on using cannabis.

Poison & Drug Information Service (PADIS) offers free and confidential telephone advice 24 hours a day, seven days a week to the public and healthcare professionals about poisons, chemicals, medicines, and herbal supplements. Call 1-800-332-1414. If it is an emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department.

If you are concerned about your own or someone else's use of cannabis, alcohol, or another drug, call Health Link toll-free at 811 or the Addiction Helpline at 1-866-332-2322. Help is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.