



# WILL CANNABIS USE AFFECT MY DRIVING?

Cannabis doubles your risk of a collision.

## NEVER DRIVE HIGH

Things are changing in Canada with regards to the use of cannabis. Regardless of how you feel about the legalization of non-medical cannabis, it is important to increase our efforts to reduce the health risks from use. Let's focus on the known facts and take positive actions to help everyone stay safe. Driving while high or impaired by cannabis IS dangerous. It is important that parents talk with young drivers about the risks of driving high or getting in the car with an impaired driver, and always be a positive example by never driving impaired.

**Evidence strongly suggests that cannabis-impaired driving can double or triple the risk of a crash (Hall, 2015).**

### How does cannabis impair my driving ability?

THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), the intoxicating chemical in cannabis, may impair the ability to drive or perform important tasks safely because it:

- slows reaction time and reduces co-ordination,
- distorts perception of space,
- makes it hard to focus and track multiple moving objects at once, and
- affects judgement and decision-making.

Cannabis can affect your ability to function at your best. There is a misconception that using cannabis makes you a better driver. The truth is, the physical and mental effects of cannabis make driving dangerous. Things could change in an instant that could cause harm to yourself or others if you cannot react quickly. Using alcohol with cannabis increases impairment and the risk of collision. Don't drive high and don't mix alcohol with cannabis. Depending on how you react to the strength and type of cannabis, the effects could be immediate or delayed and last for a shorter or longer time.

**It is recommended to wait at least 6 hours or longer after using cannabis to drive.**



## Can I be charged with impaired driving if I am caught?

Yes. Police can legally request a driver to undergo a Standardized Field Sobriety Test, oral saliva test, or blood test to confirm impairment and/or presence of drugs over the legal limit (illegal, prescription, or over-the-counter medications). If you are found impaired to drive, you will be subject to serious penalties ranging from fines and immediate license suspensions, to criminal charges and jail time.



## What are the laws related to driving and cannabis?

It is illegal to:

- drive impaired after using any form of medical or non-medical cannabis,
- use any form of medical or non-medical cannabis if a vehicle is under your care and control,
- smoke or vape cannabis (medical or non-medical) in a vehicle or boat being driven or under someone's care or control, or
- use any form of non-medical cannabis in a vehicle (edibles, extracts, smoked, vaped, etc.).

**Drivers age 21 or under, novice drivers (G1, G2, M1, M2, M2-L or M2-M licence drivers), and commercial drivers (A-F)** Ontario's zero tolerance law means that these drivers cannot have any amount of cannabis, alcohol or other drugs in their system.

**All drivers** must stay under the legal limits for cannabis or other drugs and be fit to drive, regardless if medical or non-medical cannabis is used.

## What are the rules for possession and transportation of cannabis?

Adults over 19 can legally possess and transport up to 30 grams of dried cannabis or 450 grams of edible products but it must be out of reach of the driver and passengers. Containers that have been opened must be stored in the trunk.

## Besides driving, what are other activities I should avoid if I use cannabis?

The effects of cannabis on the mind and body may impair your ability to safely perform important tasks. Do NOT use cannabis while:

- operating heavy machinery,
- at work,
- caregiving for a child or loved one,
- playing sports,
- making important decisions, or
- performing any activity that requires your full attention.

## What can I do to protect myself and others on the road?

If you choose to use cannabis, protect yourself and others on the road by planning ahead to help everyone get home safely:

- Have a designated driver.
- Call a friend or loved one.
- Call a cab or ride-share.
- Use public transit.
- Stay the night.

Using the words of our Canadian Government: ***Don't Drive High. Your life can change in an instant.***

For more information about the health effects and laws related to cannabis, visit [wechu.org/cannabis](https://wechu.org/cannabis)

References available on our website [wechu.org](https://wechu.org)