

# SAFER CANNABIS USE



## IF YOU CHOOSE TO USE CANNABIS, CHOOSE TO STAY HEALTHY

Many New Zealanders enjoy cannabis. It is safer than alcohol, and has medicinal benefits. While no one has ever died from using cannabis, it is not harmless.

### Safer consumption techniques

- Most of the harm related to smoking cannabis is heat, tars from burning plant matter, and solid particulates and ash in the smoke. Try smokefree ways of consuming cannabis, such as vaporising, edibles, teas or tinctures.
- Vaporisers create no tar, no ash and very little heat.
- Waterpipes (bongs) cool and filter smoke. Avoid taking deep tokes or holding in smoke for a long time as this can be harmful to your lungs.
- Use a pipe screen so you don't inhale burning embers or ash.
- The strength of cannabis can vary a lot. Try a small amount of any new smoke to see how strong it is.

Wait 10 minutes before deciding if you want more.

- Edibles can be unpredictable. Start low and go slow. Never give an edible to anyone who doesn't know what it is.
- Use better weed, so you need less of it. Try to grow or buy organic.
- Real cannabis is likely to be safer than synthetic substitutes.

*“Nearly half this country’s adult population has used cannabis at some point in their lives and about one in seven were classified as current users” - NEW ZEALAND LAW COMMISSION, 2011*



# NORML's Principles of Responsible Cannabis Use

## Hygiene & purity

- Use fresh bong water each time to avoid bugs and bacteria. Sterilise bongs with denture cleaners.
- Meningitis is transmitted through saliva. Don't share spit on joints, or pipe and bong mouthpieces.
- Never smoke weed that appears dyed blue, as it may have been sprayed with poison by the Police.
- Don't consume cannabis that has mould or fungus as they can be very harmful if inhaled.
- Concentrates can vary in potency and composition. If it resembles tar it may be badly made and could be toxic.

- Adults Only
- No Driving While Impaired
- Consider Set and Setting
- Resist Abuse
- Respect the Rights of Others

learn more at [www.norml.org.nz/about/responsible-use/](http://www.norml.org.nz/about/responsible-use/)

## Mixing weed with other drugs

- The effect is more unpredictable and can increase health risks. Mixing cannabis with alcohol can make you feel more out of it than you intended - and greatly impair your ability to drive.
- Adding tobacco to a 'spliff' is more harmful and can make you become nicotine dependent. Keep it pure!

## Psychological safety

- Some people are very sensitive to cannabis and can experience more intense effects. Moderate your use accordingly. For many people, less is more. For some, especially those with a predisposition or history of mental illness, cannabis is simply not advisable.

### If you need help:

*Alcohol Drug Helpline*  
*0800 787 797*  
*or visit*  
*[drughelp.org.nz](http://drughelp.org.nz)*

- Be sure that benefits outweigh any problems. If not; use less, or stop. All regular users are advised to take a break sometimes.
- When using any drug, look after yourself and your mates.



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Working to reform NZ's cannabis laws, since 1980

[norml.org.nz/about](http://norml.org.nz/about)