



## PATIENT EDUCATION GUIDE

Welcome to the Swell family and congratulations on your newfound freedom to purchase medical cannabis!

At Swell, we believe knowledge is power and the following guide is intended to help new patients understand cannabis and the various options for medicating. If you need answers that are not found in this guide, please feel free to ask us any time.

We are here for YOU!

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## General Information About Treatment with Medical Marijuana

Medical marijuana is used to treat diseases and relieve symptoms associated with qualifying conditions. Marijuana is made from the dried leaves and buds of the Cannabis plant. It can be smoked, inhaled, or ingested in food or tea. Medical marijuana is also available as a pill or an oil. In the U.S., medical marijuana—also referred to as medical cannabis—is legal in a growing number of states to ease pain, nausea, and other side effects of medical treatments, as well as to treat some diseases. Depending why a person is using medical marijuana, treatment may be short term or continue for years. The potency of marijuana can vary from batch to batch.

### FULL LIST OF QUALIFYING CONDITIONS FOR AN ARIZONA MEDICAL MARIJUANA CARD:

- Cancer
- Glaucoma
- HIV/AIDS
- Hepatitis C
- Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)
- Crohn's disease
- Agitation of Alzheimer's disease
- Cachexia or wasting syndrome
- Severe and chronic pain
- Severe nausea
- Seizures (including those characteristic of epilepsy) or
- Severe and persistent muscle spasms (including those characteristic of multiple sclerosis)
- Post-traumatic stress disorder

## Availability, Strength, and Effects of Medical Marijuana Strains and Products

Most cannabis strains affect your head or brain within minutes after medicating, but the effects tend to wear off quicker. The body effects usually creep in about 5 to 15 minutes after the head effect. Depending on the strain, the body effect may vary from a relaxed/sleepy feeling, to uplifting and energetic. The effect usually takes longer to set in but typically lasts longer than head effects.

While our knowledgeable budtenders are always happy to offer recommendations, we encourage patients to familiarize themselves with the various cannabis classifications in order to make the most educated decisions about medicating. Below are the seven main cannabis classifications and what you can expect from each.

### HEAVY INDICA

Heavy indica strains can have intense full-body effects and are recommended for relaxation, sleep, and long-lasting pain relief. Most patients use heavy indica strains for nighttime medicating.

### CLEAR INDICA

These strains are on the lighter side of Indica, but still offer pain relief and relaxation with less intense sedating effects. Most patients use clear indica strains for nighttime medicating.

### INDICA-DOMINANT HYBRID

This strain of cannabis delivers full-body pain relief with a relaxing head high. Depending on the patient's tolerance and preference, indica-dominant hybrids are good for nighttime medicating (sleep) or daytime medicating (minor pain relief without intense sedating effects).

### EVEN (50/50) HYBRID

Even hybrid strains are frequently used to alleviate stress, headaches, and depression with the perfect balance of head and body effects. These strains are appropriate for any time of day, depending on the patient's preference and tolerance.

### **SATIVA-DOMINANT HYBRID**

A sativa-dominant hybrid delivers a cerebral high with a relaxing body effect. Patients experience calm, clear-headed physical and mental relief with sativa-dominant strains, which are typically used during the day.

### **HEAVY SATIVA**

Heavy sativa strains are ideal for patients who want an intense and uplifting body high with a heavy head effect. These strains boost focus and creativity and can relieve depression and anxiety in patients. Heavy sativas are great for daytime medicating.

### **CLEAR SATIVA**

This strain classification is recommended for patients who are looking for mental effects and little-to-no physical effects. Clear sativas are stimulants that are known to help with depression, nausea, chronic pain, and focus, and are best for daytime use.

### **CBD**

CBD stands for Cannabidiol and is a cannabis compound that has significant medical benefits, but does not make people feel “stoned” and can actually counteract the psychoactivity of THC. The fact that CBD-rich cannabis is non-psychoactive or less psychoactive than THC-dominant strains makes it an appealing option for patients looking for relief from inflammation, pain, anxiety, psychosis, seizures, spasms, and other conditions without disconcerting feelings of lethargy or dysphoria.

Higher doses of marijuana intensify reactions. The patient may experience shifting sensory imagery, a flight of fragmentary thoughts with disturbed associations, an altered sense of self-identity, impaired memory, a dulling of attention despite an illusion of heightened insight, image distortion, vivid fantasies, or hallucinations.

### **EDIBLES**

Because it takes longer to feel the effects of edibles (up to two hours) patients should take it slow when medicating with cannabis-infused foods. A single dose is established as 10mg, but if you’re new to edibles, it is recommended that you start with 1mg to 5mg and increase dosage from there.

### **CONCENTRATES**

Cannabis concentrates are extremely potent and the effects can be felt almost instantly. Concentrates are strain-specific and can be purchased as shatter, crumble, or in vape cartridges. A single dose of shatter or crumble is roughly the size of a grain of rice. If medicating with a cartridge, start with one pull and see how you feel before taking another pull.

## Methods, Forms, and Routes of Administration

### INHALATION (SMOKING, VAPING)

**Smoking** is the inhalation of dried flowers of the cannabis plant and is the most common form of intake. Typically, the onset is rapid, immediate, and the duration is relatively short. Pipes, joints, and water pipes (bongs) are all used to smoke medical cannabis. Smoking is the most expedient method of consumption, with almost immediate effect and dosage controlled by the patient.

**Vaporizing (vaping)** is a process whereby the dried cannabis flower extract or concentrate is slowly subjected to heat at lower and more precise temperature allowing for the therapeutic ingredients in cannabis, cannabinoids such as THC, to phase-change into a gas or vapor and extract from the plant without burning the plant, producing vapor instead of smoke. While reducing the harm of long-term smoke inhalation, vaporizing does not change the absorption of cannabinoids into the body. However, vaping is said to be safer than inhaling smoke and allows the patient to better control the dose.

### ORAL CONSUMPTION (EDIBLES, BEVERAGES, TINCTURES, CAPSULES)

**Edibles** are cannabis-infused foods and are particularly helpful to relieve pain, spasticity and sleep disorders, but are, for obvious reasons, not the best method if experiencing nausea or vomiting.

**Beverages** infused with cannabis can be made by either boiling water and steeping leaves, stems, and buds (like tea) or by adding tincture or cannabis-infused flavored syrup to a beverage of your choice. Marijuana tea can vary in strength, depending on the strains and dosage of ingredients used. It's best to start with an amount equivalent to a marijuana cigarette for each cup; however, experimenting with different doses will help determine what is right for you.

**Tinctures** are alcohol-based cannabis extracts that can be added to food and liquids, applied on the skin, or consumed by placing drops under the tongue. This is particularly useful when nausea and vomiting are present. Tinctures and tonics are made much in the same way as edibles, but instead of cooking them in butter or oil, the cannabis flowers and leaves are soaked in alcohol. Typical dosage is between three drops to no more than two full droppers. As with edibles, it is best to start slow and use only a small portion until relief is achieved.

**Capsules** (whether CBD-only, or THC+CBD) are a relatively new option for MMJ patients. Capsules are filled with cannabis oil and are perfect for patients to medicate discreetly.

### TOPICAL/TRANSDERMAL (APPLIED TO THE SKIN)

**Topical and transdermal** cannabis products are applied to the skin for localized relief without psychoactive effects, because THC does not reach the bloodstream. Marijuana topicals, such as balms, salves, lotions, sprays, and ointments made from cannabis oils can be very effective analgesics and anti-inflammatories. Marijuana topicals are used to relieve arthritis pain, muscle soreness, swelling, joint pain, and tendonitis to name a few. Topical cannabis products have shown anti-inflammatory properties and may also have antibacterial qualities.

## Techniques for the Use of Medical Marijuana and Marijuana Paraphernalia

### PIPE

Adapted from traditional pipes used for tobacco, the cannabis pipe shares all of the same key characteristics. Pipes consist of a “bowl” (thus the vernacular reference), which is a round basin deep enough to pack marijuana flower, as well as an airtight channel (known as a “carb”) that delivers airflow through a mouthpiece.

### BONG

A bong is a water pipe with a long neck and a base filled with water. The water in a bong acts as a filtration and cooling system. Bongs are often either glass or plastic that use a bowl, stem, and water to produce smoke which is then inhaled.

### JOINT (PRE-ROLL)

A joint is a marijuana cigarette, also called a pre-roll in dispensaries. A joint can usually fit anywhere between a quarter of a gram and a gram of cannabis flower. The joint is often rolled with a single rolling paper, which often come in long and short varieties.

### DAB RIG

Dab rigs are a specific type of water pipe used primarily for smoking cannabis oils, extracts, or concentrates. “Dabbing” is the process by which these oils, extracts, or concentrates are smoked through a vapor rig.

### VAPORIZOR PEN (ELECTRONIC CIGARETTE)

A vaporizer pen or vape pen (a type of e-cigarette) is a device ranging in size from a standard pen to a large cigar that one can use to inhale cannabis concentrate and blow out the vapor. There are also dry herb vaporizers available for patients to put dry cannabis flower in the pen that is then heated and turned into vapor rather than smoke.

## Prohibition on the Smoking of Medical Marijuana in Public Places

Marijuana use is strictly prohibited in public. According to the AMMA, a public place is “any location, facility, or venue that is not intended for the regular exclusive use of an individual or a specific group of individuals.” If it is someplace where the public or selected portions of the public regularly are invited in, it is likely to be a public place. To avoid revocation of your card or prosecution please only use marijuana in the privacy of your own home.

## Alternative Medical Options

Medical marijuana is not the only natural medicine with healing properties that is available in Arizona. There are numerous apothecary shops that carry many items to aid in natural and safe medical treatment. For more information on natural remedies, visit the following websites. Consult your doctor or naturopath before starting any new treatment.

[www.home-remedies-for-you.com](http://www.home-remedies-for-you.com)

[www.nutralegacy.com](http://www.nutralegacy.com)

[www.naturalherbsguide.com](http://www.naturalherbsguide.com)

## Possible Side Effects and Contraindications of Marijuana Use

### POTENTIAL SIDE EFFECTS

Use of marijuana can cause dry mouth, nausea, vomiting, dry or red eyes, heart and blood pressure problems, lung problems, impaired mental functioning, headache, dizziness, numbness, panic reactions, hallucinations, flashbacks, depression, and sexual problems.

### CONTRAINDICATIONS

**Pregnancy:** Marijuana is unsafe when taken by mouth or smoked during pregnancy. Marijuana passes through the placenta and can slow the growth of the fetus. Marijuana use during pregnancy is also associated with childhood leukemia and abnormalities in the fetus.

**Breastfeeding:** Using marijuana, either by mouth or by inhalation is likely unsafe during breastfeeding. The dronabinol (THC) in marijuana passes into breast milk and extensive marijuana use during breastfeeding may result in slowed development in the baby.

**Heart disease:** Marijuana might cause rapid heartbeat, short-term high blood pressure. It might also increase the risk of a having heart attack.

**A weakened immune system:** Cannabinoids in marijuana can weaken the immune system, which might make it more difficult for the body to fight infections.

**Lung diseases:** Long-term use of marijuana can make lung problems worse. Regular, long-term marijuana use has been associated with lung cancer and also with several cases of an unusual type of emphysema, a lung disease.

**Seizure disorders:** Marijuana might make seizure disorders worse in some people; in other people it might help to control seizures.

**Surgery:** Marijuana affects the central nervous system. It might slow the central nervous system too much when combined with anesthesia and other medications during and after surgery. Stop using marijuana at least 2 weeks before a scheduled surgery.

**DO NOT** drive a motor vehicle or operate heavy machinery under the influence of marijuana.

**DO NOT** undertake a position of responsibility such as childcare or even entering the workplace while under the influence of marijuana.

## Potential Drug-to-Drug Interactions

Combining cannabis with alcohol, prescription drugs, non-prescription drugs, or dietary supplements may cause or increase potential for adverse effects.

## Alcohol and Medical Marijuana

Mixing cannabis with alcohol may result in nausea and/or vomiting, or feelings of panic, anxiety, or paranoia. Mixing cannabis with alcohol can also increase the risk of vulnerable people experiencing psychotic symptoms. There is some evidence to support that having alcohol in your blood causes a faster absorption of THC (the active ingredient in cannabis that causes intoxication). This can lead to the cannabis having a much stronger effect than it would normally have and can result in 'greening out'. Greening out refers to the result of feeling sick after smoking cannabis. These symptoms may include turning pale, sweating, dizziness, nausea, and/or vomiting. This result is more likely to occur if the individual has been drinking alcohol before smoking cannabis rather than the other way around.

## Signs and Symptoms of Substance Abuse

Just like any drug, regular use of marijuana leads to the development of a tolerance for it. This means that you need more and more of the drug in order to achieve the same high. If you need more and more of the drug to get high, and you begin experiencing withdrawal symptoms such as loss of appetite, irritability, insomnia or anxiety, you could be physically dependent on marijuana. Dependence on marijuana means that the person needs to use marijuana just to feel 'normal'. Symptoms of marijuana withdrawal include anxiety, headaches, trouble sleeping, irritability, loss of focus, anxiety, headaches, cravings, sweating, chills, a depressive state, and insomnia. These sensations are similar to the experience of breaking a tobacco addiction. They are not life-threatening but can be disruptive enough that the user may have a difficult time being fully functional until the symptoms stop.

## Substance Abuse Programs and Referral Information

**COMMUNITY BRIDGES** 602-273-9999 or 480-962-7711

**ABBE'S SANCTUARY** 480-518-6022

**BANNER MEDICAL CENTER** 602-839-6800 or 800-254-4357

**RECOVERY INNOVATIONS** 602-650-1212

**ST. LUKE'S BEHAVIORAL HEALTH** 602-251-8535

## Guidelines for Notifying the Physician Who Provided Written Certification for Medical Marijuana

**PHYSICIAN**

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**PHYSICIAN'S CLINIC**

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**PHONE NUMBER**

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**EMAIL**

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**ADDRESS**

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- Should any non-emergency side effects or contraindications occur from medical marijuana consumption, contact your certifying physician using the information you above.
- In the event of any life threatening emergency, call 9-1-1 immediately



## Guidelines for Reporting Usage and Symptoms to the Physician Providing Written Certification for Medical Marijuana and Any Other Treating Physicians

PHYSICIAN

PHYSICIAN'S CLINIC

PHONE NUMBER

EMAIL

ADDRESS

SYMPTOMS

- Your written certification for medical marijuana is valid for 12 months. Report your usage and symptoms to your physician providing the written certification at least once within the year to renew and continue receiving medical marijuana treatment.
- Should usage or symptoms worsen, contact your physician who provided the written certification for medical marijuana using the information recorded above for further or alternative treatments.
- In the event of any life threatening emergency, call 9-1-1 immediately

## Self Assessment

NAME

QUALIFYING CONDITIONS:

Please rate yourself on the following—  
with 1 being mild and 10 being severe.

MILD 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 SEVERE

DATE	PAIN	CACHEXIA +/- weight	NAUSEA	SEIZURES # of seizures	SPASMS	AGITATION



**SWELL BELL**  
17201 N 19th Ave  
Phoenix, AZ 85023  
602-388-4400

**SWELL CAMELBACK**  
1040 E Camelback Rd  
Phoenix, AZ 85014  
602-354-3094

**SWELL CENTRAL**  
3333 S Central Ave  
Phoenix, AZ 85040  
480-739-0366

**SWELL YOUNGTOWN**  
11200 W Michigan Ave  
Youngtown, AZ 85363  
623-444-5977



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