

# SPEAKING TO YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER ABOUT MEDICAL CANNABIS



A 2023 survey of medical cannabis patients from the Maryland Cannabis Administration (MCA) found:

**1 in 4 patients are not comfortable discussing medical cannabis with their healthcare provider.**

**Patients selected “educating healthcare providers” about cannabis as a top desired public education priority.**

**Patients report perceived stigma is the highest when discussing cannabis with healthcare professionals, compared to friends and family.**

**Young adults (18-20), adults 55+, and patients who are pregnant or breastfeeding are the least likely to feel comfortable speaking to their providers about their medical cannabis use.**

## Why Talk to Your Healthcare Provider About Medical Cannabis

- **Your Safety.** Cannabis use is important for your healthcare providers to know, as it can have potential drug interactions (e.g., supplements, prescription and non-prescription drugs, and alcohol) and impacts on anesthesia and post-surgical care.
- **Better Care.** Maintaining an open dialogue with your healthcare provider can lead to better, more personalized care.
- **Education.** Your healthcare provider can be a resource for you on medical cannabis, helping monitor its effects related to both your qualifying condition and overall health and well-being.

## What To Tell Your Healthcare Provider

- If you **consume cannabis** for any purpose (medical or non-medical).
- Your usual **method(s)** for consuming cannabis (i.e., smoking, vaping, edibles).
- The **symptoms or conditions** you use medical cannabis to treat or alleviate, especially mental health-related symptoms like anxiety, depression, or insomnia.
- If you are using cannabis to **reduce or replace** alcohol, tobacco, prescription medications, opioids, benzodiazepines, stimulants, psychedelics, or other substances.
- If you are interested in **stopping or reducing** your cannabis use.

**Consult Clinical Directors.** Clinical directors are employed by licensed dispensaries to provide guidance on differing strengths, ratios and concentrations, as well as product types and routes of administration. Clinical directors can address potential benefits, side effects, and/or contraindications, and can supplement conversations about cannabis that you have had with your healthcare provider. If you have questions, ask to speak with a clinical director at your dispensary (there is no cost).