

Cannabis – Information for Transplant Patients

Does marijuana use prevent me from receiving a transplant?
The use of marijuana (cannabis) does not stop you from receiving a transplant at LHSC. Until there is more information about the effects of cannabis use, we do not recommend nor restrict the use of cannabis in transplant patients.
What are the health effects of cannabis in the transplant patient?
<p>There is little research about possible health effects of cannabis in transplant patients. Some studies suggest that cannabis <u>may</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cause heart rhythm disturbances, trigger heart attacks or stroke, and other blocked blood vessels in your body; • cause kidney injury, abdominal pain, fast heart rate, high blood pressure or low blood pressure and dizziness; • worsen bronchitis and be a <u>risk for fungal infection when inhaled</u> by patients taking anti-rejection drugs. <p>It is important that you consider the possible risks to your health when deciding to use any cannabis product. We advise transplant patients to <u>NOT smoke</u> marijuana. If required, we recommend that you consider using other products.</p>
Will cannabis interact with my transplant drugs?
<p>Cannabis (both THC and CBD oil) may affect the levels of <i>many</i> drugs. No studies have looked at anti-rejection drugs in enough detail to help predict how much of an affect it will have on individual patients.</p> <p>Regular cannabis use will make it necessary to test your transplant drug levels more often. This is to make sure that your drug levels are at the best possible level to prevent rejection.</p> <p>Irregular and/or infrequent marijuana use can cause variation in your transplant drug levels and make it difficult for the transplant team to adjust your drugs accurately.</p>
Can I use ‘medical marijuana’ while in the hospital?
<p>LHSC has a policy for <u>medical marijuana</u> use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuation of medical marijuana for patients in the hospital will only be considered if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ there are no other options for pain and/or symptom management, ❖ medical marijuana is appropriate for your medical condition and does not interfere with other treatment, and ❖ you can provide documentation of authorization for use under ACMPR. • LHSC will provide security and storage of a patient’s medical marijuana when not in use – storage by patients, families or others is not permitted while in the hospital. • Patients must arrange for supply and pay for their own supply of medical marijuana. • If medical marijuana is allowed, it can <u>only</u> be ingested by mouth and <u>only</u> in your hospital room. <p>Smoking or inhalation of medical marijuana must not occur on hospital grounds. Talk to your health care team if you require medical marijuana while in hospital.</p>
Can I use recreational marijuana while in the hospital?
<p>LHSC has a policy on <u>recreational cannabis</u> management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If your specialist recommends that continued recreational marijuana use is necessary for your care, marijuana use will be treated the same as medical marijuana. Your specialist will need to prescribe medical marijuana and complete all necessary documentation. • Visitors are not permitted to use recreational cannabis on LHSC property in accordance with hospital policy.

References:

- Rein JL, Wyatt CM. Marijuana and cannabinoids in ESRD and earlier stages of CKD. Am J Kidney Dis. 71(2): 267-274.
- Greenan G, Ahmad SB et al. Recreational marijuana use is not associated with worse outcomes after renal transplantation. Clin Transplant 2016; 30: 1340–1346.
- Andrews CN, Devlin SM et al. Canadian Association of Gastroenterology Position Statement: Use of Cannabis in Gastroenterological and Hepatic Disorders. JGAG 2019; 2(1):37-43.