

# Weed 101

How and why patients use medical marijuana

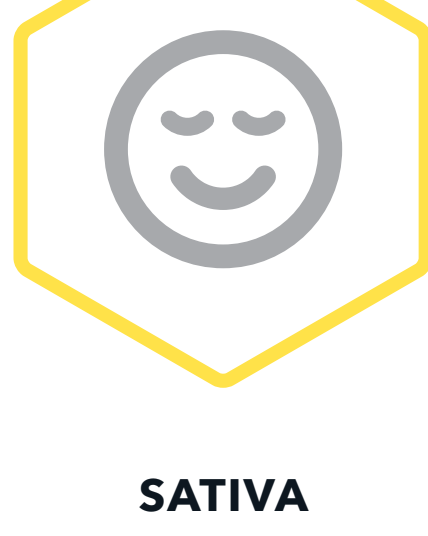


## What it is

Medical marijuana refers to the use of the cannabis plant as a medicinal therapy. Cannabis plants can produce more than 100 different types of cannabinoids, a type of chemical that reacts with the cannabinoid receptors in the brain. The mixture of different strains with various combinations and levels of cannabinoids, along with different methods of consumption, provide users with varied effects.

The two most common cannabinoids found in medical marijuana are THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) and CBD (cannabidiol). THC is responsible for producing the mental and physical effects of medical marijuana. CBD has many of the same therapeutic qualities as THC, but without psychoactive effects.

There are two main types of cannabis plants: sativas and indicas. Hybrids are strains bred from crossing two or more varieties of sativa and indica plants.



### SATIVA

- Uplifting and stimulating effects used to elevate mood and think creatively.
- Mainly affects the mind.
- Best used during the day.



### INDICA

- Relaxing and sedative effects used to reduce pain and reduce stress.
- Mainly affects the body.
- Best used during the late afternoon or evening.



### HYBRID

- Combines effects of sativa and indica strains for balance between mind-body effects.

## Who uses it

Patients reporting use of medical marijuana on PatientsLikeMe

2,848



Average age

46 yrs



LIVING WITH (MOST COMMON PRIMARY CONDITIONS REPORTED BY FREQUENCY)

PTSD

Traumatic brain injury (TBI)

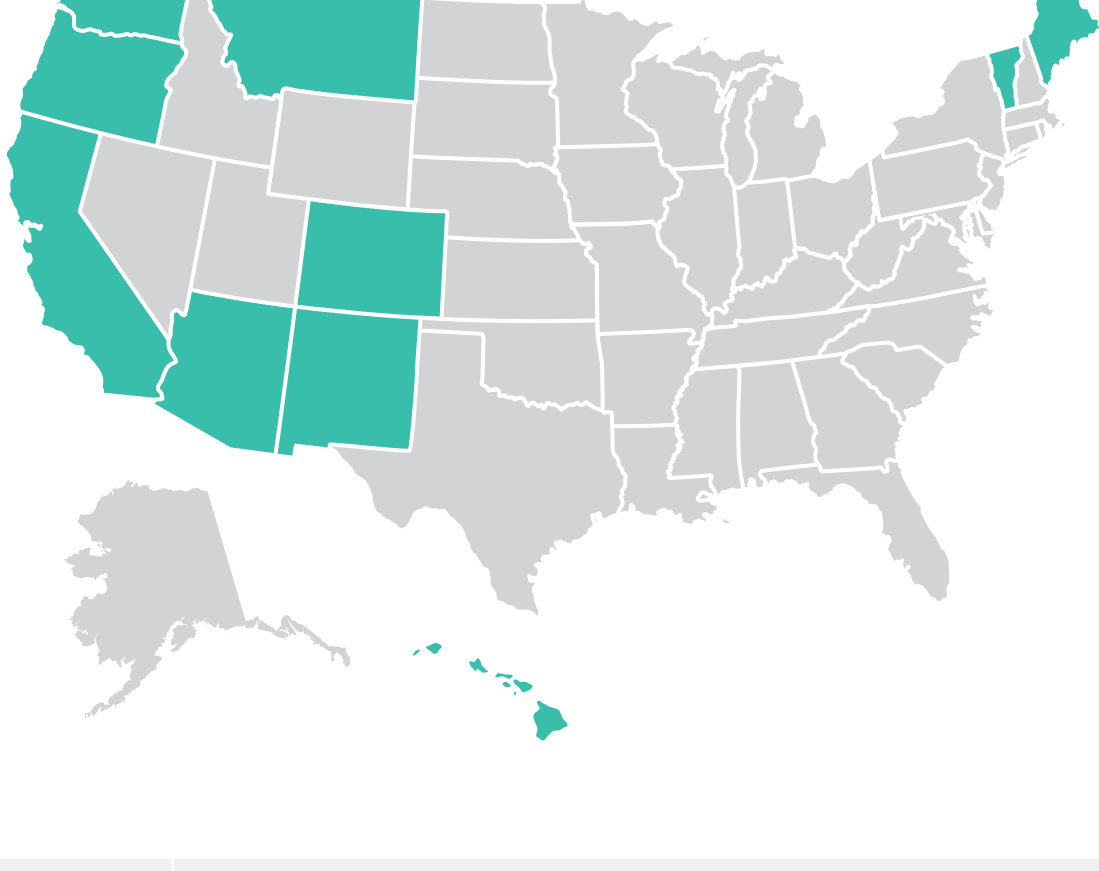
Chronic pain syndrome

ALS

## By location

MEDICAL MARIJUANA USE IS MOST COMMON IN MEMBERS LIVING IN:

1. New Mexico
2. Oregon
3. Hawaii
4. Colorado
5. Washington
6. Maine
7. Montana
8. Vermont
9. Arizona
10. California



## Ways they take it

NEW METHODS REGULARLY EMERGING



### EDIBLES

Such as brownies



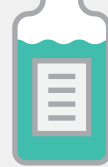
### TOPICALS

Cream/oil



### SMOKING/VAPORIZING

Joint or vaporizer



### TINCTURES

Liquid extracts, taken orally

## Why they use it

(PATIENTS CAN REPORT MORE THAN ONE TREATMENT PURPOSE)



### Pain

47%



### Anxiety

24%



### Stiffness/spasticity

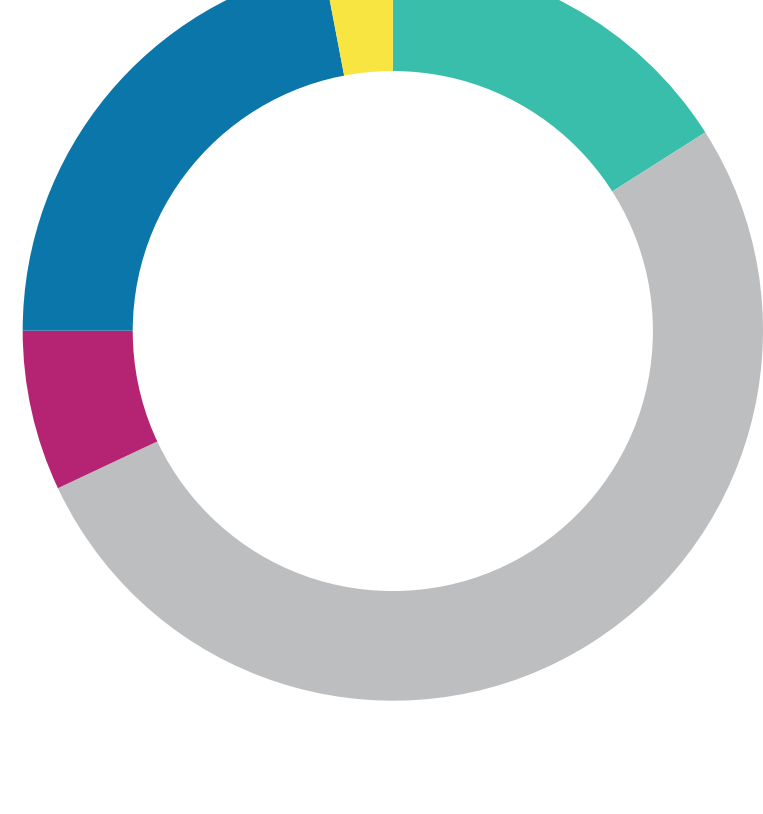
18%



### Insomnia

14%

## How often people use it



- More than once a day (16%)
- Once a day (52%)
- 1-3 times a week (7%)
- Take as needed (22%)
- Less than once a week (3%)

## Most frequently reported side effects



### +APPETITE

17%



### SLEEPINESS

12%



### DRY MOUTH

14%

## Side effect severity

12%

Of those reporting, side effect severity is low overall, with only 12% reporting "moderate" or "severe" side effects.

## Treatment efficacy

OF THOSE REPORTING, TREATMENT EFFICACY IS VERY HIGH OVERALL

94% Have rated its efficacy "moderate" or "major"

COMPARED WITH TOP-RATED PRESCRIPTION DRUGS WITHIN EACH TREATMENT PURPOSE (AS RATED BY PATIENTSLIKEME MEMBERS, % OF PATIENTS REPORTING MODERATE/MAJOR EFFICACY)



### PAIN

Medical marijuana (90%) vs. Oxycodone-acetaminophen (Percocet) (84%)



### ANXIETY

Medical marijuana (96%) vs. Alprazolam (Xanax) (86%)



### STIFFNESS/SPASTICITY

Medical marijuana (90%) vs. Clonazepam (Klonopin) (73%)



### INSOMNIA

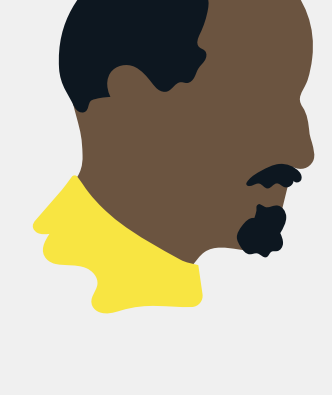
Medical marijuana (93%) vs. Zolpidem (Ambien) (77%)

## Patient quotes



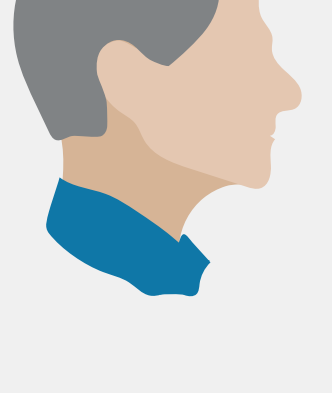
"Marijuana is the biggest reason why I sleep as well as I do."

Patient living with ALS



"There are absolutely side effects, like I would never drive with it, and concentration can be difficult, but I'm sure with regular use those things would diminish."

Patient living with PTSD



"My daily activities are bearable when I can afford to use it. The only downside is that it is not covered under Medicaid."

Patient living with fibromyalgia



"It helps me to relax, especially easing the tension, stiffness and rigidity in my neck and shoulders, that in turn causes severe headaches."

Patient living with Parkinson's disease

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