

# MEDICAL MARIJUANA FOR HIV/AIDS? WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW.

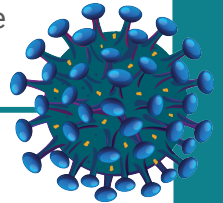
**EDUCATIONAL SERIES:  
HEALTH CONDITIONS**

Updated 2024

**FLORIDA LAW FORMALLY RECOGNIZES A POSITIVE STATUS FOR HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS (HIV) AND ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME (AIDS) AS A QUALIFYING CONDITION FOR MEDICAL MARIJUANA.**

## WHAT IS HIV/AIDS?

- HIV is a virus that weakens a person's ability to fight against and recover from infections. There is no cure, but HIV can be managed with medications.
- A person with an HIV infection might first experience flu-like symptoms, such as fever, swollen lymph nodes, and sore throat. Once the HIV infection has progressed, patients can be asymptomatic, or may have symptoms such as weight loss and nerve pain that can worsen over time.
- If not treated, an HIV infection can lead to AIDS. Patients with AIDS may experience severe infections or other severe illnesses that may lead to death.



## CAN MEDICAL MARIJUANA HELP HIV/AIDS?

- There is limited evidence to support that medical marijuana is effective for the treatment of HIV/AIDS.
- However, medical marijuana might be able to improve symptoms of HIV infection by assisting a person to eat more to maintain their body weight. Some studies also show reduced nerve pain (known as neuropathic pain) in patients with HIV/AIDS that use medical marijuana.

## WHAT SHOULD I ASK MY HEALTHCARE PROVIDER?

1. Discuss any need for dosing adjustments for HIV/AIDS treatments, or for prescription medications to treat other conditions, such as pain, depression, cancer, or for an autoimmune disorder.

Certain compounds found in medical marijuana (e.g., cannabidiol) can interact with medications for HIV/AIDS and other conditions and may require further dosing adjustments that should be guided by a physician.

2. Discuss if you have any history of substance use disorder or mental health conditions such as schizophrenia.

Patients with these conditions are often excluded from clinical trials that examine the effectiveness and safety of medical marijuana, due to concerns about an increased risk of adverse events.

3. Report and discuss any concerning effects of medical marijuana with your physician.

There are many possible interactions between medical marijuana, diseases, medications, and other substances. Therefore, regular communication with your healthcare provider can assist in identifying risks.



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# ABOUT THE CONSORTIUM

Established in June 2019, the Consortium for Medical Marijuana Clinical Outcomes Research conducts, shares, and supports research on the effects of medical marijuana on health conditions and symptoms in Florida.

Composed of nine universities across the state and led by a leadership team at the University of Florida, the Consortium works to contribute to the understanding of medical marijuana use on health conditions and symptoms.



## MEMBER UNIVERSITIES

## CONTACT US

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