



Medical Cannabis by the Numbers

States Recognizing the Medical Value of Cannabis

- **39** states have effective medical cannabis laws.
- **10** states have laws pertaining to low-THC, high-CBD cannabis.
- **0** states have repealed effective medical cannabis laws.
- In total, **49** states acknowledge the medical benefits of cannabis.

Medical Cannabis and Opioids

- **64%** decrease in opioid use among chronic pain patients in Michigan who used medical cannabis^[1]
- **48%** reduction in patients' opioid use after three months of medical cannabis treatment^[2]
- **78%** of patients either reduced or stopped opioid use altogether^[3]
- **1,826** fewer doses of painkillers on average per year, per state, for patients participating in Medicare Part D^[4]

Prescription Medications

- Nearly **247,000** people died in the United States from overdoses involving prescription opioids from 1999 to 2019.
- **20%** of prescriptions are “off label” — prescribed for a condition for which they are not FDA-approved.^[5]
- **0** people have died from cannabis overdoses in all of recorded history.

Number of Patients

- **1.5%** of a state's population, on average, enrolls in the medical cannabis program, for a total of **nearly 4 million patients**.^[6]
- In comparison, 32% of American adults received an opioid prescription in the past two years, and 18% received one in the past year.^[7]
- **24%** of the U.S. population took three or more prescription drugs in the past 30 days.^[8]

Qualifying Conditions

- **38** states' programs include a general category for severe or chronic pain or allow cannabis if opiates have been or could be prescribed for the condition.
- **37** states include PTSD as a qualifying condition. Alaska and South Dakota are the only exceptions.

Research

- **10,000** studies were reviewed by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, which led them to find:^[9]

- Conclusive or substantial evidence that cannabis or cannabinoids are effective in the treatment of chronic pain, chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting, and multiple sclerosis spasticity symptoms;
- No link between smoking cannabis and lung cancer; and
- No gateway effect.
- **50%** of Crohn’s patients who used medical cannabis entered complete remission and **45%** found significant improvement in symptoms.^[10]
- **75%** reduction in symptom scores were reported when PTSD patients were using cannabis compared to when they were not.^[11]
- **Hundreds of thousands** of patients suffering from HIV/AIDS, glaucoma, cancer, multiple sclerosis, Crohn’s disease, seizure disorders, chronic, severe, and persistent pain, and other debilitating illnesses find that cannabis provides relief from their symptoms.

Support for Allowing Medical Cannabis

- **76%** of doctors^[12]
- **93%** of Americans^[13]
- **83%** of veterans^[14]

^[1] KF Boehnke, et al., “Medical Cannabis Use Is Associated With Decreased Opiate Medication Use in a Retrospective Cross-Sectional Survey of Patients With Chronic Pain,” *Journal of Pain*, June 2016.

^[2] Staci A. Gruber, et al., “Splendor in the Grass? A Pilot Study Assessing the Impact of Medical Marijuana on Executive Function,” *Front. Pharmacol.* 13 October 2016, Vol. 7.

^[3] “The Cannabis and Opioid Survey,” Healer.com, 4 October 2016.

^[4] Ashley C. Bradford et al., “Medical Marijuana Laws Reduce Prescription Medication Use In Medicare Part D,” *Health Aff.* July 2016, Vol. 35 no. 7.

^[5] Radley, David C., Finkelstein Stan N., and Stafford, Randall S., “Off-label Prescribing Among Office-Based Physicians,” *Archives of Internal Medicine* 166 (9), 2006: 1021–1026.

^[6] www.mpp.org/issues/medical-marijuana/state-by-state-medical-marijuana-laws/medical-marijuana-patient-numbers/

^[7] “One-Third of Americans Have Received an Opioid Prescription in the Past Two Years ,” NORC at the University of Chicago, Sept. 27, 2018.

^[8] “Health, United States,” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019, table 39.

^[9] — “The Health Effects of Cannabis and Cannabinoids: The Current State of Evidence and Recommendations for Research,” National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, January 2017.

^[10] — Timna Naftali, et al., "Treatment of Crohn's Disease with Cannabis: An Observational Study," *Israel Medical Association Journal* (2011).

^[11] — Greer, GR, et al., “PTSD symptom reports of patients evaluated for the New Mexico Medical Cannabis Program,” *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs*, 2014 January-March;46(1):73-7.

^[12] — *Journal of New England Medicine* survey, February 2013.

^[13] — Quinnipiac University Poll, March 2019.

^[14] — The American Legion, “Survey shows veteran households support research of medical cannabis,” November 2017.