



# Medical Cannabis by the Numbers

## States Recognizing the Medical Value of Cannabis

- **38** states have effective medical cannabis laws.
  - **11** 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  - **0** states have repealed effective medical cannabis laws.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.
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## Medical Cannabis and Opioids

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

- Nearly **247,000** people died in the United States from overdoses involving prescription opioids from 1999 to 2019. Overdose deaths involving prescription opioids more than quadrupled from 1999 to 2019.<sup>[5]</sup>
  - **20%** of prescriptions are “off label” — prescribed for a condition for which they are not FDA-approved.<sup>[6]</sup>
  - **0** people have died from cannabis overdoses in all of recorded history.
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## 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.<sup>[7]</sup>
  - In comparison, 32% of American adults received an opioid prescription in the past two years, and 18% received one in the past year.<sup>[8]</sup>
  - **24%** of the U.S. population took three or more prescription drugs in the past 30 days.<sup>[9]</sup>
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## 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.
  - **36** states include PTSD as a qualifying condition. Alaska and South Dakota are the only exceptions.
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## Research

- **10,000** studies were reviewed by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, which led them to find:<sup>[10]</sup>
    - 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.<sup>[11]</sup>
  - **75%** reduction in symptom scores were reported when PTSD patients were using cannabis compared to when they were not.<sup>[12]</sup>
  - **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.
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## Support for Allowing Medical Cannabis

- **76%** of doctors<sup>[13]</sup>
  - **93%** of Americans<sup>[14]</sup>
  - **83%** of veterans<sup>[15]</sup>
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<sup>[1]</sup> 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.

<sup>[2]</sup> 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.

<sup>[3]</sup> "The Cannabis and Opioid Survey," [Healer.com](http://Healer.com), 4 October 2016.

<sup>[4]</sup> Ashley C. Bradford et al., "Medical Marijuana Laws Reduce Prescription Medication Use In Medicare Part D," *Health Aff.* July 2016, Vol. 35 no. 7.

<sup>[5]</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Drug Overdose Overview," available at <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/deaths/prescription/overview.html>.

<sup>[6]</sup> 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.

<sup>[7]</sup> [www.mpp.org/issues/medical-marijuana/state-by-state-medical-marijuana-laws/medical-marijuana-patient-numbers/](http://www.mpp.org/issues/medical-marijuana/state-by-state-medical-marijuana-laws/medical-marijuana-patient-numbers/)

<sup>[8]</sup> "One-Third of Americans Have Received an Opioid Prescription in the Past Two Years ," NORC at the University of Chicago, Sept. 27, 2018.

<sup>[9]</sup> "Health, United States," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019, table 39.

<sup>[10]</sup> "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.

<sup>[11]</sup> Timna Naftali, et al., "Treatment of Crohn's Disease with Cannabis: An Observational Study," Israel Medical Association Journal (2011).

<sup>[12]</sup> 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.

<sup>[13]</sup> Journal of New England Medicine survey, February 2013.

<sup>[14]</sup> Quinnipiac University Poll, March 2019.

<sup>[15]</sup> The American Legion, "Survey shows veteran households support research of medical cannabis," November 2017.