



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

Using Cannabis Safely during the Pandemic

A harm reduction approach will minimize the spread of COVID-19

You may be wondering how to consume cannabis safely and responsibly in the midst of a pandemic. Using cannabis the way you did before the pandemic may no longer be as safe and could even help the virus spread. Here are some harm reduction tips for using cannabis safely.

Prepare your own cannabis

For your safety, prepare for yourself the cannabis you are going to consume. Being the only person to touch the cannabis and the device you will use to consume it is critical in preventing the spread of the virus.

Avoid sharing joints, vapes, pipes and bongs

Sharing is a big part of the culture of using cannabis. Unfortunately, the virus can be spread if you share a joint, vape, pipe or bong with your friends. Not sharing with other people during the pandemic is the safest option when consuming cannabis.



If you are preparing pre-rolled joints for others:

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If that's not possible, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Wear a mask. Learn how to use a facemask and how to make your own [here](#).
- Use a sponge and water to seal the joint – do not lick it.
- Put the pre-rolled joints into plastic bags – this will reduce handling and limit the spread of the virus.



If you are receiving pre-rolled joints from someone:

- Try to keep your physical distance (2 metres) during the exchange.
- Consider waiting 72 hours before smoking (so that the virus becomes inactive).
- Wash your hands before and after smoking the pre-rolled joints.

Avoid smoking and vaping cannabis

Smoking and vaping may increase your risk of developing severe COVID-19 symptoms. This is a good time to try consuming cannabis in a way that does not affect your lungs. You could use edibles and tinctures instead.

Buy Cannabis from Licensed Producers and Retailers

- Licensed cannabis producers and retailers are following guidelines for handling and packaging cannabis products that minimize human contact with the substance, reducing the chances that the virus has contaminated the cannabis products.
- You can order cannabis online for delivery to your home or it may be available for pick-up at your local cannabis dispensary.
- During the pandemic, cannabis retailers are allowed to be open but they may have reduced hours and will likely only allow a limited number of people into stores at one time due to physical distancing protocols.