

# All the Cannabis-related COVID-19 Questions You Are Too Scared to Ask

By now, most everyone knows that COVID-19 is a flu-like disease that seems to hit seniors, the immunocompromised and those with cardiovascular issues quite hard – but how is this new coronavirus treating the cannabis industry? With all sorts of misinformation



flying about, you can trust the following answers to your most burning questions about weed and this new, scary disease.

## Will Using Cannabis Products Make Me More Susceptible to the Disease?

While COVID-19 presents differently in different patients, it is undeniably a respiratory illness, meaning it primarily attacks the respiratory system and tends to be more severe in those with weak or compromised lungs and airways. Thus, we see a large number of hospitalizations among people with chronic lung conditions like asthma, COPD, cystic fibrosis – and you are much more likely to develop a lung disease if you frequently smoke.

Fortunately, studies on lung health in smokers indicate that marijuana and tobacco do not have the same effect on lungs. Though burning tobacco and marijuana contain many of the same dangerous substances, like tar and toxic gases, the rate of lung disease amongst marijuana smokers is much, much lower.

This indicates that as long as you smoke weed in moderation, your lungs might not be compromised, and you might not be in an at-risk group for COVID-19. You can read more about the connection between marijuana use and lung disease here: [health.harvard.edu](https://www.health.harvard.edu)

Still, you might want to take some precautions in how you use cannabis over the coming weeks and months. If you have noticed that your marijuana use has increased – due to boredom or anxiety – you might switch from smoking or vaping to a less lung-centric method, like edibles or oils, for some of your cannabis enjoyment. Additionally, you should avoid sharing marijuana tools, especially pipes, bongs and joints, with anyone outside your household – or anyone at all.

## **Will I Still Have Access to Medical Marijuana Products?**

It seems that all states that permit marijuana usage have determined medical marijuana to be an essential good, meaning that even during quarantine, medical marijuana patients are guaranteed access to the products they need to maintain their health and wellness. In fact, many states are expanding access to marijuana, permitting dispensaries to offer curbside pickup and even home delivery to reduce the need for social contact. What's more, some states are increasing possession limits, even encouraging users to stock up with at least 90 days-worth of marijuana.



Even so, some smaller dispensaries might close shop to keep their employees healthy and avoid the expense of conforming to states' mandates for operation, like keeping customers at a six-foot distance or ensuring employees are protected by masks, gloves and/or glass

barriers. You should investigate which medical dispensaries remain open in your area; for example, Washingtonians can find dispensaries near them at this site: [weedmaps.com](https://weedmaps.com)

If you don't currently have a medical marijuana prescription or license, but you do use recreational marijuana therapeutically, you might want to take the time to get your medical card soon. Fortunately, some states are loosening regulations on how you can get a medical marijuana license, as well. You should check to see if you can use telemedicine in your state to obtain a prescription or card, so you don't have to put additional strain on your local health care system.

## **Will Cannabis Growers Continue to Operate During the Pandemic?**

Because most of East Asia shut down completely for weeks while COVID-19 raged in that part of the world, we are looking at an imminent shortage of certain manufactured goods, like [condoms](#) and [smartphones](#). Now, as the United States shelters in place, many are starting to wonder if manufacturing here will take a hit as well.

Whether cannabis growers will continue to operate will likely vary from organization to organization. Smaller growers might be able to manage their crops with skeleton crews, but larger operations might suffer from lack of staff, and as a result,

they might output less product in the coming months. As long as growers take the right precautions – wearing adequate PPE and maintaining safe distance from one another – grow operations should be able to continue.

The new coronavirus has given the world plenty of questions, and even experts don't have all the answers. For now, those who most need cannabis products should be able to access them, with greater ease than they did previously. Though it's impossible to predict how the cannabis industry will look in even one year's time, you should feel confident continuing to use your favorite cannabis products with only minor tweaks for safety and security.

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