

Coping Strategies for Quitting Cannabis

The 3 As Approach

Alternative: Use other products to satisfy the desire to smoke or use marijuana/cannabis or do an alternative activity.

- Chew candy, gum, mints, sunflower seeds, straws or toothpicks
- Occupy your hands with silly putty, rubber bands or stress balls
- Brush your teeth
- Work out, do yoga, get your body moving!
- Find a new hobby or interest to help keep busy

Alter: Change the situation or environment that triggers your marijuana/cannabis use.

- Change your route if you drive by dispensaries or locations where you've used cannabis
- Clean your car, home, clothes, etc. so that it doesn't smell like cannabis
- Take breaks by watching videos, listening to music, etc.
- Take deep breaths or go for a jog after an argument
- Spend more time with your friends and family members who do not smoke/use

Avoid: Avoid your triggers.

- Identify your triggers and avoid them (use the next page to think about your personal triggers)
- Take your work breaks inside instead of going outside
- Get rid of all products and paraphernalia (bongs, lighters, vapes, mods, rolling papers, etc.)
- Spend less time with friends/family who use or are not supportive of you quitting/cutting back
- Avoid parties, kickbacks, concerts, etc. where marijuana/cannabis use might be common

Prepare for Potential Withdrawal Symptoms

Marijuana/cannabis impacts your body and quitting or cutting back means your body will need to adjust. The severity of withdrawal can be affected by how often you use, how much you use, and how potent the product is that you use -more frequent use, a greater amount, and more potent products increase the odds of withdrawal. You may experience some of the following withdrawal symptoms when you stop using or cut back:

- Loss of appetite or nausea
- Changes in mood (anxiety, irritability, depressed mood, feeling withdrawn, etc.)
- Fever, chills, sweating
- Headaches
- Restlessness
- Sleep problems (insomnia, bad or vivid dreams, etc.)
- Cravings

Unfortunately, some of these withdrawal symptoms are the same reasons that people use cannabis (i.e., to help sleep, to regulate mood or deal with mental health concerns like anxiety). Remember that there are alternatives to using marijuana/cannabis that can help treat these concerns, and that withdrawal symptoms are temporary (they usually peak around 2-6 days of no use) and will go away eventually (usually within about 3 weeks)!

T-Break Guide

You can also use this T-Break Guide to help you take a tolerance break and decrease your use:

- <https://www.uvm.edu/health/t-break-take-cannabis-tolerance-break>

My Personalized Quit Plan

Name: _____

My Quit Date: _____

Follow-Up Appointment: _____

Reasons to Quit or Cut Back

Examples: It costs too much, I might be drug tested, etc.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Triggers

Triggers are situations that prompt you to want to smoke or use marijuana/cannabis.

Examples: After a meal, driving, when stressed, feeling bored, or feeling sad

Trigger 1

What will I do?

Trigger 2

What will I do?

Trigger 3

What will I do?

Trigger 4

What will I do?

Trigger 5

What will I do?

Trigger 6

What will I do?

Things to do Instead

Examples: Go for a walk, call a friend who supports you, etc.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Support

Who can support me at home?

Who can support me at school?

Who can support me at work?

Which friends will help me the most when I'm quitting?

Which friends will be less helpful when I'm quitting?

Other Support Strategies

Examples: Call SAMHSA's National Helpline at [800-662-4357](tel:800-662-4357)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Rewards of Quitting

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.