

Become a participating MCP provider

Some patients may ask about medicinal cannabis as part of their care. Healthcare providers interested in participating in the New Jersey Medicinal Cannabis Program (NJ-MCP) can register with the New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission (NJ-CRC) to authorize eligible patients.

Discussing cannabis use with patients can be incorporated into routine care conversations and doesn't require a separate visit. These conversations may help support patient safety, informed decision-making, and continuity of care.

Healthcare providers must hold a bona fide relationship with any patient they may wish to register. The healthcare provider must provide ongoing assessment, care, and treatment of the patient's medical condition (from the approved conditions list).

Scan the QR code below or visit njcrcgov.info/Medicinal to learn more about becoming an authorized provider.



Education toolkits

You can download and print, or request cannabis safety educational materials from the NJ-CRC to share with your patients.

Orders are shipped at no cost to you.



njcrcgov.info/materials

Learn more:



njcrcgov.info/medicinal



medcannabis@crc.nj.gov



(609) 292-0424

General safety guidance

The NJ-CRC's safety page has tailored advice for you. Scan to explore.



Talking to Your Patients About Cannabis

Supporting informed, patient-centered care in New Jersey



This content is intended for healthcare providers and is for education purposes only.

Why this matters

Patients may not always disclose cannabis use or ask questions about cannabis-related health concerns. Creating space for open, nonjudgmental conversations can help healthcare providers (HCPs) better understand a patient's overall health, identify potential risks, and support safer treatment decisions, including:

- Drug interactions (prescriptions, over-the-counter supplements, alcohol, anesthesia)
- Anesthesia and surgical outcomes
- Chronic disease management
- Mental and behavioral health considerations (past family history or personal history of psychosis, schizophrenia, or other mental health conditions)
- Pregnancy and breast feeding (cannabis use can affect fertility in both men and women)

Patient safety and outcomes

Open conversations can help HCPs better understand a patient's full health picture and treatment goals, and they play a key role in:

- Identifying potential risks and contradictions
- Monitoring for side effects or dependency
- Counseling patients on safe-use practices
- Supporting informed decision-making

Key areas to assess

- Method of use (inhaled, oral, topical)
- Frequency and dosage (if known)
- Reasons for use (symptom management or substitution)
- Co-use with other substances or over-the-counter drugs
- Potential impacts on daily functioning or mental health
- The age of the patient. For those under 21, the brain is still developing, and cannabis use can affect emotional growth, memory, and decision-making.

Considerations for counseling

Discuss potential benefits and risks based on the patient's health status and treatment goals. Important considerations may include:

- Impaired driving or operating machinery
- Cognitive or mental health effects
- Risks during pregnancy or breastfeeding
- Potential dependency or problematic use, also known as Cannabis Use Disorder (CUD)
- Interactions with medications or other substances
- Route of administration and related health considerations (e.g. inhaled products may pose additional risks for patients with respiratory or cardiovascular conditions)

Encourage ongoing dialogue as part of their care. Assess whether your patient may be at increased risk for CUD and ask if they have concerns or questions about their cannabis use.

Starting the conversation



Normalize the discussion as part of routine care. ([The American College of Gynecologists recommends](#) routine, nonjudgmental screening for cannabis use before, during, and after pregnancy to support informed patient care and safety.) Consider asking:

- "Are you currently using or have used cannabis in any form?"
- "Are you registered in the New Jersey Medicinal Cannabis Program, or have you considered participating?"
- "Have you considered cannabis as part of your treatment plan?"

Reducing stigma improves care

Some patients may hesitate to disclose cannabis use due to fear of judgment or stigma. Routinely asking all patients about cannabis use and creating a neutral environment for these discussions can lead to:

- More accurate patient histories
- Better-informed treatment decisions
- Improved patient-provider communication
- Better health outcomes