

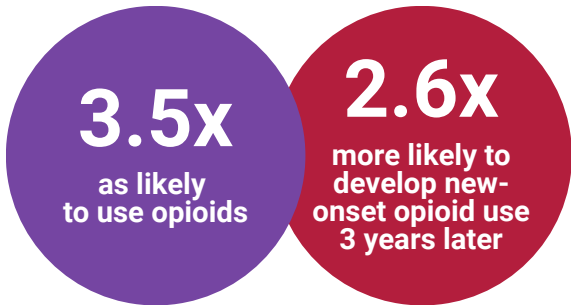
Marijuana, Opioids, and Pain Management

"[P]rescription opioids were seen as a wonder drug, especially for pain management...We should not repeat history with yet another wonder drug installed before proper evidence."¹

Marijuana legalization has not reduced opioid prescriptions

Many studies that have claimed that medical marijuana laws are related to reduced opioid overdose rely on group-level data instead of individual data. **Group-level data can show trends but cannot be directly applied to individuals.** Studies that focus on individual data and can tie marijuana use directly to opioid use and opioid use disorder are superior and show a much different picture.

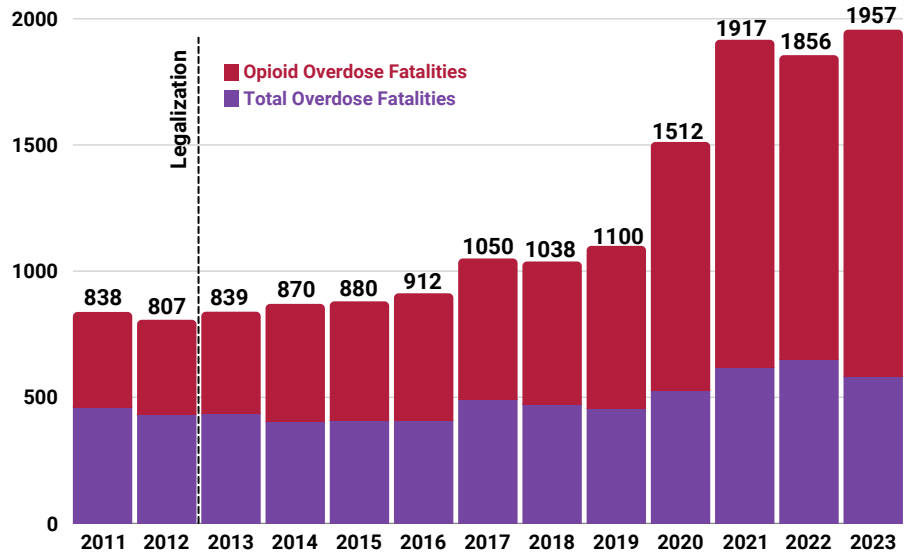
In one study that relied on individual data, marijuana users were:²



The opioid crisis appears to be worsening where marijuana has been legalized.

*Journal of the American Medical Association (2018)*⁴

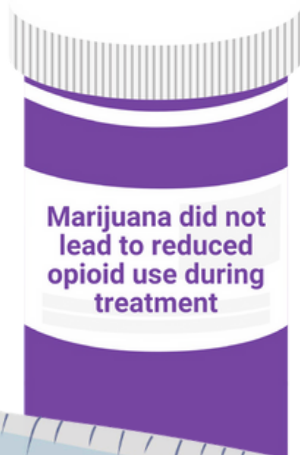
Colorado Opioid-Related Overdose Fatalities³



Opioid overdose fatalities have **increased** in Colorado since legalization

Marijuana users are more likely to abuse opioids

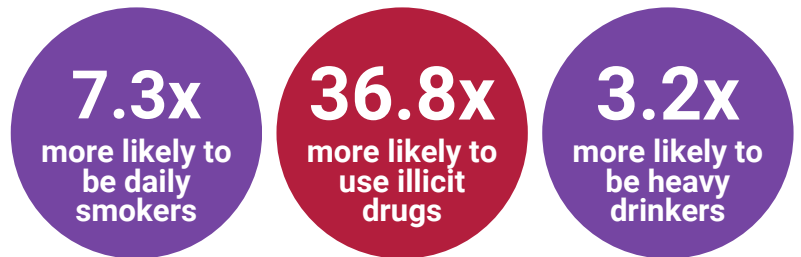
A 2019 McMaster University Study analyzed the impact of marijuana use and illicit opioid use during methadone maintenance therapy:⁵



Marijuana is often used with other substances

Rather than discouraging polysubstance use, or the use of multiple drugs, marijuana legalization is associated with further use, misuse, and dependence on other drugs.

A 2021 University of Queensland Study found that marijuana users who began using as adults were:⁶



Marijuana use can decrease pain thresholds, with users requiring more opioid medication both during and after surgery⁷

Endnotes

1. Rehm, J. (2018). Commentary on Liang et al. (2018): The potential impact of medical cannabis on public health with respect to reducing prescription opioid use and associated harm. *Addiction*, 113, 2071-2072. doi: 10.1111/add.14408

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5. Hasin, D. S., Kerridge, B. T., Saha, T. D., Huang, B., Pickering, R., Smith, S. M., et al. (2016). Prevalence and correlates of DSM-5 cannabis use disorder, 2012-2013. *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 7(4), E665-E673. doi:10.9778/cmajo.20190026

6. Chan, G.C.K., Becker, D., Butterworth, P., Hines, L., Coffey, C., Hall, W. and Patton, G. (2021), Young-adult compared to adolescent onset of regular cannabis use: A 20-year prospective cohort study of later consequences. *Drug Alcohol Rev.*, 40: 627-636. <https://doi.org/10.1111/dar.13239>.

7. Holmen I.C., Beach J.P., Kaizer A.M., Gumidyala R. (2020). The association between preoperative cannabis use and intraoperative inhaled anesthetic consumption: A retrospective study. *Journal of Clinic Anesthesia*. 67:109980. doi:10.1016/j.jclinane.2020.109980