



*Scan with your phone camera for a digital copy of this handout.*

## Quitting Marijuana Before Your Transplant

*This handout explains how marijuana can impact your health and success as a transplant patient. It includes resources to help you quit.*

### Marijuana Use and Your Transplant

Marijuana is legal to use in Washington state. However, research shows that using it regularly has health risks. **We highly encourage all patients to stop using marijuana products.** This includes cannabis, THC, CBD, gummies, edibles, vapes, and tinctures.

During your transplant evaluation, our social worker will ask you about your history of using drugs and alcohol, and we will test your urine. These tests will help your care team understand your drug use habits and health.

Studies have shown that marijuana can affect your body in ways that can increase transplant risks. Because of this, many insurance companies require you to stop using marijuana before they approve you for a transplant. If you have certain health risks, such as a substance use disorder (addiction to drugs or alcohol), our transplant team might also require you to completely stop using marijuana.

### Why should I stop using marijuana?

- Marijuana can cause medication interactions after transplant which can affect your new liver.
- Marijuana can cause fatal fungal infections after transplant.
- Marijuana increases your risk of health problems such as:
  - Mood disorders, such as depression or psychosis
  - Heart disease, heart attack, and stroke
  - Thinking, learning, and memory problems
  - Respiratory problems including lung infections and bronchitis
  - Liver scarring (in patients with hepatitis C)

## Resources for Quitting Marijuana

If you use marijuana regularly, you may experience *withdrawal* symptoms. This can be a challenging time that starts about 1 to 2 days after quitting and may last for about 3 to 4 weeks. Common symptoms include:

- Anger, aggression, and irritability
- Restlessness, nervousness, and anxiety
- Change in appetite or weight
- Sleep changes and bad dreams
- Headaches, nausea, vomiting, and abdominal pain

We encourage all transplant candidates to stop using all forms of marijuana. Please know there are resources available to support you, as we know this will be challenging. The list below includes resources and ways to stay on track with your goals:

- A free place to ask about resources or to get help: AAC (American Addiction Centers) 888.902.8027
- Join an online stop-smoking program
- Avoid activities and situations where you used to smoke
- Chew on sugarless gum or hard candy
- Focus on your goal! Quitting marijuana can save you money, improve your health, and give you a better chance for a successful transplant.
- Ask your doctor or transplant team if you need more help quitting marijuana. We are here to help you.

### Questions?

Your questions are important. Please call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

---

---