

Office of Medical Marijuana Use

Florida's Official Source for Responsible Use

Know the Facts:
Health Effects
on Minors

Florida's medical marijuana law allows the use of medical marijuana and low-THC cannabis by patients under the age of 18, as recommended by the patient's qualified physician. However, marijuana use in adolescence can have potentially harmful and long-lasting effects on a teen's health and well-being. It is important for minors and their caregivers to be aware of the possible health effects in order to make a well-informed decision about whether medical marijuana is right for them or a loved one.

Requirements of Minor Patients

Florida law has specific requirements for the medical use of marijuana by minors. These include:

- A qualified physician must determine that the medical use of marijuana would likely outweigh the potential health risks for all patients. If the patient is younger than 18 years of age, a second physician must concur with this determination, and such concurrence must be documented in the patient's medical record.
- A qualified physician may not issue a physician certification for marijuana in a form for smoking to a patient under 18 years of age unless the patient is diagnosed with a terminal condition, the qualified physician determines that smoking is the most effective route of administration for the patient, and a second physician who is a board-certified pediatrician concurs with such determination.
- The certifying physician must obtain the written informed consent of the patient's parent or legal guardian before issuing a physician certification to the patient for marijuana in a form for smoking.
- If a qualified patient is younger than 18 years of age, only a caregiver may purchase or administer marijuana for medical use by the qualified patient. The qualified patient may not purchase marijuana.

Marijuana Use During Adolescence

The teen brain is actively developing and often does not fully develop until the mid-20s. Marijuana use during this period may have negative effects on the developing brain. These effects include:

- Difficulty thinking and problem solving
- Problems with memory and learning
- Impaired coordination
- Difficulty maintaining attention

Along with the developing brain, marijuana use in adolescence can also have serious impacts on a teen's school and social life. These effects include:

- Decline in school performance
- Increased risk of mental health issues
- Impaired driving
- Potential for addiction

For More Information:

KnowTheFactsMMJ.com
TinyURL.com/sg-minors
TinyURL.com/cdc-teens

The Office of Medical Marijuana Use:

4052 Bald Cypress Way, Bin M-01
Tallahassee, FL 32399
MedicalMarijuanaUse@FLHealth.gov

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Jan 2020