

Health Impacts of Smoking, Cannabis, and Vaping



Did you Did you know that about 85% of lung cancer cases are caused by smoking? Let us look at how smoking affects the lungs and the rest of the body.

People often use cigarettes, cannabis, and/or vapes when socializing or relaxing; however, these products can be very harmful to our bodies, especially our lungs.

1. Cigarettes

Cigarettes are the most common tobacco product. People may smoke for many reasons, such as socializing or trying to lessen their stress, but cigarettes can be addictive. This addiction can become dangerous since smoking has many long-term effects, including cancer, heart disease, eye disease, pregnancy issues, type 2 diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, and premature aging. Lung diseases like COPD are also common. The tar in cigarettes causes most lung damage.

Compared to cannabis, cigarettes cause more lung inflammation. Quitting smoking cigarettes can reduce inflammation and mucus build-up, but some lung conditions are irreversible.

2. Cannabis

Cannabis can be smoked or eaten (edibles). People may use it for stress relief and social reasons. Cannabis affects mental, cognitive, and physical health.

- *Short-term* effects include relaxation and heightened senses, but may also cause confusion, sleepiness, poor memory, anxiety, and paranoia. It can damage blood vessels, decrease blood pressure, and increase heart rate.
- *Long-term* use can harm memory, concentration, intelligence, and decision-making. It can also increase the risk of bronchitis, lung infections, chronic coughs, and mucus build-up.

Edibles cause less lung harm but take longer to feel and their effects last longer than smoking. They also affect more of the mental and cognitive function of the body.

Cannabis contains harmful chemicals like those in cigarettes, which can be just as damaging to your lungs when cannabis is smoked.

3. Vaping

Vaping is an electronic device to inhale mist made from liquid nicotine or cannabis. It was sold as a safer option than smoking tobacco or cannabis, but concerns about its effects on the lungs have increased. Although the long-term effects are not fully known, vaping has been linked to lung diseases like "popcorn lung," vaping-related pneumonia, and collapsed lungs. Research shows vaping can cause different serious lung issues compared to smoking.

While smoking cigarettes, cannabis, and vaping might offer temporary relief or enjoyment, their long-term effects on lung health and overall well-being are significant. It is important to be aware of these risks and make informed choices before using them and/or when trying to quit.

