
Assessment and Referral Resources for Cannabis Use Disorder

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June 26, 2025

Objectives

- Understand the prevalence of Cannabis Use Disorder (CUD) after legislative legalization and decriminalization of cannabis
- Describe screening tools and diagnostic criteria for CUD
- Role of SBIRT for at risk Cannabis Use
- Describe barriers to referral for individuals struggling with CUD

Prevalence of Cannabis Use Disorder

Self-Reported Cannabis Use Before and After Legalization

Table 2. Past-Month Marijuana Use, Frequent Marijuana Use, and CUD in the Past 12 Months Among 495 796 Respondents Before vs After RML Enactment From 2008 to 2016^a

Age Group, y	Marijuana Use			Frequent			CUD in the Past 12 mo		
	Past Month			% Who Reported Frequent Use			% Who Met Criteria for CUD		
	% Who Reported Use								
	Before RML ^b	After RML ^c	AOR (95% CI) ^d	Before RML ^b	After RML ^c	AOR (95% CI) ^d	Before RML ^b	After RML ^c	AOR (95% CI) ^d
12-17	4.76	5.28	1.12 (0.97-1.28)	1.07	1.19	1.12 (0.87-1.40)	2.18	2.72	1.25 (1.01-1.55)
18-25	13.06	14.03	1.09 (0.99-1.20)	4.64	5.08	1.10 (0.97-1.25)	3.62	3.48	0.96 (0.80-1.14)
≥26	5.65	7.10	1.28 (1.16-1.40)	2.13	2.62	1.24 (1.08-1.41)	0.90	1.23	1.36 (1.08-1.71)

Abbreviations: AOR, adjusted odds ratio; CUD, cannabis use disorder; RML, recreational marijuana law.

^a All models were adjusted for respondent age, sex, race/ethnicity, nativity, urbanicity, and total family income; overall contemporaneous trend across all US states; state percentage male; percentage white; percentage aged 10 to 24 years; and percentage older than 25 years without a high school education. Frequent use is defined as 20 days or more of use in the past month.

^b Estimated adjusted prevalence from model, RML states before the enactment of RML.

^c Estimated adjusted prevalence from model, RML states after the enactment of RML.

^d Adjusted odds ratio, comparing after vs before.

6.8%

Marijuana Use Disorder in Past Year: Among People Aged 12 or Older (2023)

Imagine a substance that you have to take first thing everyday before they can even start your day. You ignore your spouse and kids until you get it. You feel terrible if you can't have it. Mostly you take it by yourself, but occasionally you use socially with others. You use it mainly as a performance enhancing drug, but some people just like how it makes them feel. Many people are compulsive about their use - the quality, the mixing, preparing...

COFFEE

What are the risks associated with Cannabis Use

- Heavy use at younger ages associated with:
 - lower educational attainment, especially for males (Horwood 2010)
 - increase in mental health diagnosis and persistent symptoms (Coffey and Patton 2016)
- Cohort study unable to assess causality, so may be a bidirectional effect.

In addition, daily cannabis use is associated with an increase risk of heart attacks and stroke (Jeffers 2024)

Substance Use Disorder

Legal substances can be problematic - in essence the behaviors around use are more important than the pharmacology of the drug.

1. Tobacco Use Disorder
 2. Alcohol Use Disorder
 3. Cannabis Use Disorder
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Screening Tool and Diagnostic Criteria: Cannabis Use Disorder

Cannabis Use Disorder: DSM Criteria

- Taken in larger amounts or over a longer period than was intended
- Unsuccessful efforts to cut down
- Time spent to obtain, use cannabis, or recover from its effects
- Craving, or a strong desire or urge to use
- Failure to fulfill major role obligations at work, school, or home
- Persistent or recurrent social or interpersonal problems related to use
- Reduced social, occupational, or recreational activities due to use
- Recurrent use in situations in which it is physically hazardous (i.e. Driving)
- Continued despite exacerbation of a persistent or recurrent physical or psychological problem
- **Tolerance**
- **Withdrawal**

Cannabis Use Disorder: DSM (Continued)

Severity is assessed by number of criteria met.

- **Mild:** Presence of **2** to **3** symptoms
- **Moderate:** Presence of **4** to **5** symptoms
- **Severe:** Presence of **6+** symptoms

Cannabis Withdrawal Syndrome

1. irritability, anger, or aggression
2. nervousness or anxiety
3. trouble sleeping
4. appetite or weight loss
5. restlessness
6. feeling depressed
7. significant discomfort from one of the following: stomach pain, tremors or shakes, sweating, hot flashes, chills, headaches

Youth and Adolescents: CRAFFT Screening

During the PAST 12 MONTHS, on how many days did you:

1. Drink more than a few sips of beer, wine, or any drink containing alcohol? Say “0” if none.
2. **Use any marijuana (weed, oil, or hash, by smoking, vaping, or in food) or “synthetic marijuana” (like “K2,” “Spice”) or “vaping” THC oil? Put “0” if none.**
3. Use anything else to get high (like other illegal drugs, prescription or over-the-counter medications, and things that you sniff, huff, or vape)? Say “0” if none.

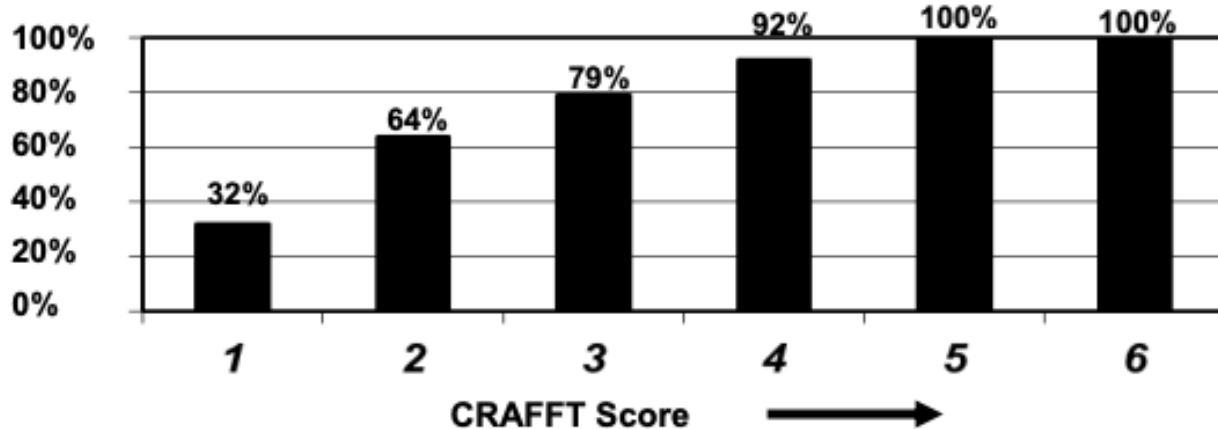
CRAFFT Screening - Risk Factors for SUD

- **C** Have you ever ridden in a **CAR** driven by someone (including yourself) who was “high” or had been using alcohol or drugs?
- **R** Do you ever use alcohol or drugs to **RELAX**, feel better about yourself, or fit in?
- **A** Do you ever use alcohol or drugs while you are by yourself, or **ALONE**?
- **F** Do you ever **FORGET** things you did while using alcohol or drugs?
- **F** Do your **FAMILY** or **FRIENDS** ever tell you that you should cut down on your drinking or drug use?
- **T** Have you ever gotten into **TROUBLE** while you were using alcohol or

Risk of SUD based on CRAFFT Score

1. Show your patient his/her score on this graph and discuss level of risk for a substance use disorder.

Percent with a DSM-5 Substance Use Disorder by CRAFFT score*



*Data source: Mitchell SG, Kelly SM, Gryczynski J, Myers CP, O'Grady KE, Kirk AS, & Schwartz RP. (2014). The CRAFFT cut-points and DSM-5 criteria for alcohol and other drugs: a reevaluation and reexamination. Substance Abuse, 35(4), 376–80.

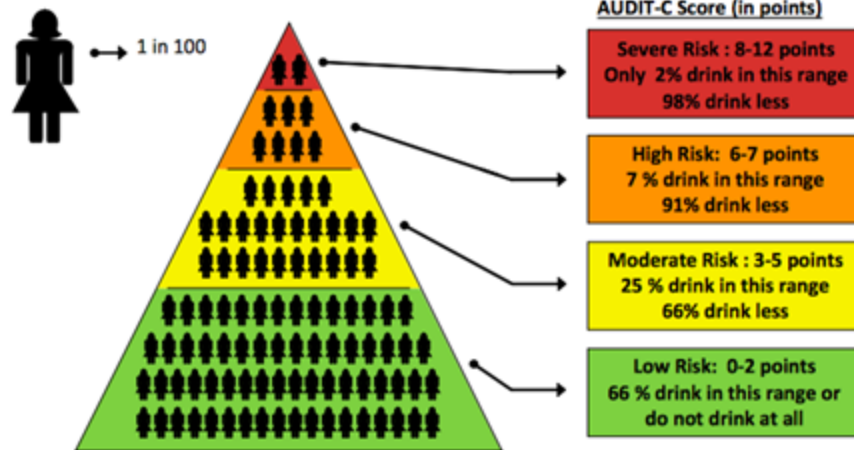
SBIRT

Screening Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment is an evidence based

- approach to systematic screening
- motivational interviewing and brief counseling based at risk use
- referral for High-Risk and SUD.

Women, age 29 and younger

How many others drink as much as you?



The **AUDIT-C** is a questionnaire given to thousands of VA patients. This triangle shows how your drinking compares to Female Veterans, age 29 or younger.

Women who score 3 or higher drink above recommended limits and are at increased risks for harm.

Source: Survey of Healthcare Experiences of Patients, 2008, VA Office of Quality and Performance

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Referral to Treatment

Patients identified as at high-risk for use and diagnosed with CUD should be referred for treatment.

In Maryland, Referral to Treatment may include:

- 1) Self identification and outreach via 988
- 2) 12 step and group based referral resources
- 3) Primary care referral to local SUD and BH programs
- 4) Telehealth based programs for CUD

988 and 12 step programs

988

- Crisis Line Services
- Single access point for Crisis Behavioral Health needs
- 24/7 availability
- Referral to local resources

12 Step programs

- Marijuana Anonymous (Online)



Treatment Modalities for CUD

Modalities

Psychotherapeutic Modalities

- Motivational Enhancement Therapy
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- Contingency Management

Pharmacotherapy:

No highly effective treatment, however, medication can improve symptoms related to withdrawal, use, or comorbidities.

Telehealth provision of SUD care

- Traditional Telehealth services by brick and mortar providers in Maryland
- Exclusive Telehealth providers that work in Maryland and in other jurisdictions around the country
- Counseling only programs that provider telehealth based counseling
- Apps are new to the addiction medicine field. They use of apps are currently in the pilot phase and apps are FDA approved apps to specifically treat cannabis use disorder

Primary Care Referral to Local SUD/BH Services

- Individual Counseling
- Group Based Counseling
- Integrated BH services
- Population Specific Resources:
Adolescent Services

Convenience Sample: Posting of email to MD-DCSAM members about treatment for Cannabis Use Disorder

- Sheppard Pratt Addiction Services (Prioritizes Co-Occurring MH and CUD)
- Springs Health (Hybrid In-Person/Telehealth Services)

Maryland Addiction Consultation Service

How to request a consultation



Call 1-855-337-MACS

Access the warmline
Monday – Friday, 9 am – 5 pm



Submit a request

Through our secure survey
system, REDCap



Email

MACS@som.umaryland.edu

Summary

- Integrating assessment tools into multiple settings is an important part of identifying the need for Cannabis Use Disorder Treatment
- Targeting interventions at high-risk youth and adults may lead to early identification prior to the diagnosis of Cannabis Use Disorder
- Treatment of Cannabis Use Disorder is primarily integrated into current Behavioral Health and Substance Use Systems