

Opioid Guide

This guide is designed to help patients decrease or stop their opioid use entirely with the help of Medical Cannabis. Find other helpful guides at utahmarijuana.org.

Pros of including cannabis in your pain regimen:



Enhances opioid
effectiveness



Helps withdrawal
symptoms



Decreases long-term
side effects



Assists in opioid
reduction

Coming from a surgical background, I have seen firsthand the turmoil that opioid addiction can cause a patient. It's very dear to my heart and a large part of the reason I made the switch to Medical Cannabis. Contrary to opioids, nobody has ever died of cannabis overdose and in most cases, it's an exit drug. While there is no one-size-fits-all approach, I encourage our patients to use this guide to taper down or even eliminate opioid use entirely, ultimately helping them feel better.

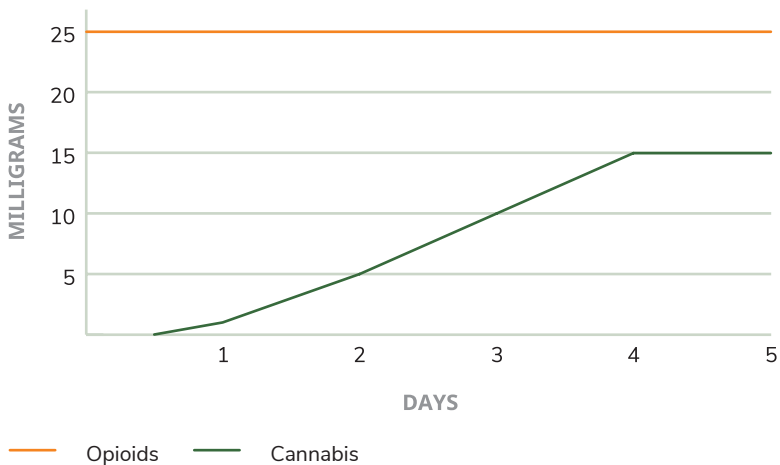
-Tim Pickett PA-C, Founder

Many patients successfully use this method to reduce opioid use by 50%-80% within two weeks. For help dialing in your most therapeutic dose of THC, refer to our Find Your "Just Right" Dose guide at utmmj.org/guides. Follow the 5 Day Introduction and continue to take your current dosage of pain medication. Once

you've found your perfect cannabis dose, then we'll tackle reducing your opioid dose.

If you have trouble finding relief from 2-15mg THC in addition to your opioids, you can try switching delivery methods from a tincture to something more potent, like a vape cartridge or gummy.

Find your "just right" dose





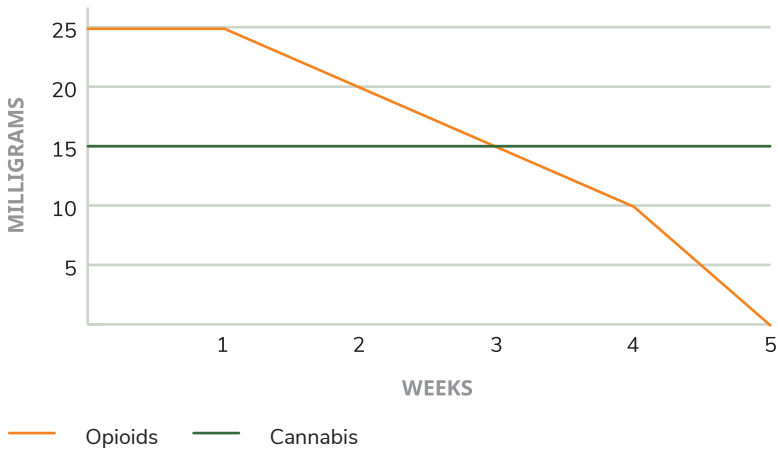
Dosing Notes:

How will I know when I reach my “just right” dose? Cannabis makes the opioid effects stronger/last longer.

How do I know when I’ve exceeded my “just right” dose? You notice an increase in unwanted side effects.

Start by reducing your daily opioid intake by ~10% for one week. If you find that this isn’t tolerable, try a gentler reduction of ~10% each month. Listen to your body.

Reduce your opioid use



Nora Norco (30mg /day for 3 months)

Nora’s “just right” THC dosage is 15mg /dose, adding inhaled methods as needed for breakthrough pain.

With the help of Medical Cannabis, Nora was able to quickly lower her dose until she was able to stop opioid use completely after 1 month with no withdrawal symptoms.

Week	Norco Dose
One	25mg /day
Two	20mg /day
Three	15mg /day
Four	10mg /day
Five	None

Oscar Oxycodone (80mg /day for 3 years)

Week	Norco Dose
One	70mg /day
Two	60mg /day
Three	50mg /day
Four	40mg /day
Five	30mg /day
Six	20mg /day
Seven	10mg /day
Eight	None

Oscar's "just right" THC dosage is 20mg /dose, adding inhaled methods as needed for breakthrough pain.

With the help of Medical Cannabis, Oscar was able to gradually lower his dose until he was able to stop opioid use completely after 7 months with tolerable withdrawal symptoms.

Fight breakthrough symptoms:

- Inhaled methods (preferably flower) help give fast relief.
- Take a 2-second sip of your inhaled method, wait 10-20 minutes & repeat if needed.
- Stay away from concentrates or high-potency cannabis oil cartridges unless you find no relief from 3-5 sips of inhaled flower.

*Note: concentrates can build a patient's tolerance to THC much faster than other delivery methods. Check out our Reset Your Tolerance guide on utmmj.org/guides for help keeping your tolerance and dispensary costs low.





Cautions:

Work closely with your pain medication prescriber before adjusting your opioid dosage & be honest about your plans to use cannabis to do so. Serious side effects and withdrawal from opioids may occur during this process.

Work closely with your cannabis provider to develop an ongoing cannabis treatment plan.

If taking an opioid-type medication (suboxone, etc.) for opioid addiction, do not attempt to adjust your medication without speaking with your prescriber.

Cannabis is an intoxicating substance at moderate-to-high doses – treat with caution.

SIDE EFFECTS ARE COMMON.

Commonly reported side effects include dizziness, sleepiness, increased anxiety (usually from too much THC), dry mouth, dry eyes, poor balance, short-term memory issues, and reduced motor skills.