

Hospital Stays and Emergency Visits Caused by Cannabis Use (2007–2020)

The harms associated with cannabis use in Canada have been increasing, including the first two years after legalization (2019–2020).

- Between 2007 and 2020, the rate of hospitalizations caused by cannabis use increased by **120%** and emergency department (ED) visits increased by **88%**.
- Rates were higher in males than in females and people aged 15–34 years.

In 2020 alone:



5,318

hospitalizations due to cannabis use, particularly for mental and behavioural conditions like psychotic disorders.



37,341

ED visits due to cannabis use, particularly for mental and behavioural conditions like harmful use.

Between 2019 and 2020, the first two years cannabis was legal:



People aged 0–14 reported higher rates of hospitalizations due to harms associated with mental and behavioural conditions and unintentional injuries.

60% Hospitalizations from unintentional injuries rose more for **females (60%)** than **males (24%)**.



Almost half (48%) of ED visits due to mental and behavioural conditions among the **0–14 age group** were for acute intoxication.

What do we need?

- Continued monitoring of cannabis-related harms and indicators (including frequency of use, product potency and overall level of cannabis exposure) to help people understand the risks associated with use, particularly among younger populations.
- Increased access to mental health and substance use health services and evidence-based public education on cannabis use — especially among young people.

Suggested citation

Malam, R., MacDonald-Spracklin, R., Biggar, E., Sherk, A., Ziv, Anat., Gabrys, R., ... Stockwell, T. (2025). Original quantitative research – trends in cannabis-attributable hospitalizations and emergency department visits: data from the Canadian Substance Use Costs and Harms Study (2007–2020). *Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention in Canada: Research, Policy and Practice*, 45(6). Ottawa, Ont.: The Public Health Agency of Canada. <https://doi.org/10.24095/hpcdp.45.6.01>