NEW YORK STATE | Office of Cannabis Management

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

CANNABINOID HYPEREMESIS SYNDROME (CHS)

Can cannabis make you feel sick?

Similar to determining if a prescription medication is right for you, it's important to understand and consider certain risks related to cannabis consumption. Some people who consume cannabis frequently over time can start to feel sick and experience unpleasant symptoms of a medical condition known as **Cannabinoid Hyperemesis Syndrome (CHS)**.

What is Cannabinoid Hyperemesis Syndrome (CHS)?

Cannabinoid Hyperemesis Syndrome (CHS) is a medical condition that can develop in individuals who consume cannabis frequently over time. It causes the body to react in unexpected ways, including:

- Severe abdominal pain,
- Persistent nausea, and
- Repeated vomiting, sometimes uncontrollably.

In some cases, symptoms are so intense that individuals may seek emergency medical care. These symptoms often occur in cycles—improving for a time but returning if cannabis consumption continues.

What causes CHS?

The exact cause of CHS is not yet fully understood. Current research suggests that it may be linked to the way cannabis affects the body's digestive and stress-response systems.

CHS doesn't happen to everyone, and everyone is different! However, certain high-THC cannabis products—such as dabs, wax, and vapes (concentrates)—may increase the risk, particularly for individuals who consume cannabis daily or in large amounts.

If you're a consumer of high-THC cannabis products, please check out our Know Your Concentrates Brochure and other materials available in the Cannabis Education Library for tips on safer, more responsible consumption.

What can relieve symptoms in the moment?

Interestingly, many people with CHS report temporary relief from symptoms by taking hot showers or baths. This is believed to help calm the same nerve pathways affected by cannabis. However, this relief is typically short-lived, and symptoms often return.

How serious is CHS?

CHS can lead to serious health complications if left untreated, including:

- Dehydration
- Nutrient loss
- Electrolyte imbalances
- Potential kidney problems

Diagnosis can be difficult, as symptoms are similar to other conditions like food poisoning or anxiety. Additionally, some healthcare providers may not be familiar with CHS or may not ask about cannabis consumption. Open communication with your medical practitioner is important—especially if you consume cannabis regularly and are experiencing unexplained illness.

How common is CHS?

CHS is considered rare, but it may be underdiagnosed. Because the symptoms can resemble other conditions and because not everyone reports their cannabis consumption, many cases may go unrecognized. Increased awareness and education are key to better understanding and identifying CHS.

How is CHS treated?

The only known long-term treatment for CHS is reducing or stopping cannabis consumption. This allows the body to reset and recover.

Some individuals find that switching to lower-THC products helps, but for many, symptoms are only resolved after cannabis is discontinued entirely.

If there is an accidental exposure to cannabis or cannabis products of any kind, or you have an adverse reaction to cannabis, call the Poison Center at **(800) 222-1222**. Call 911 if the person is showing signs of an emergency.

Need to report an adverse event or an issue with a cannabis business or cannabis product?
Report An Incident: **cannabis.ny.gov/report-an-incident**