

# Start Low, Go Slow

A First-Time  
Medical  
Cannabis  
Patient's  
Guide



**VIREO**  
H E A L T H  
O F N E W Y O R K

**VIREO HEALTH**

1-844-4-VIREO • WWW.VIREOHEALTHNY.COM

# START LOW, GO SLOW | A First-Time Medical Cannabis Patient's Guide

## Start Low, Go Slow

Vireo Health is very concerned about the experience of our patients who are not yet familiar with medical cannabis. The first few times that medical cannabis is utilized can be the most risky regarding unpleasant side effects for patients. Vireo supports the

“Start Low, Go Slow” philosophy to minimize these risks.

This means that patients should start with a very low dose and wait a longtime at first to wait for the effects to take hold, which

is a similar approach to medication safety dosing for many other traditional medications.

The Vireo pharmacists and patient care center team will work with you to ensure that you have a positive experience and are confident when you leave the cannabis patient center.



## Initial Dosing Protocols

Vireo is working vigorously on initial dosing protocols, based upon guidelines in other countries and states with more long-term experience with dosing cannabis products. These systems will help our pharmacist to best instruct you on the best way to use your medicine.

Vireo is also committed to responding to patient and caregiver questions and concerns. Educational materials will be available online to be accessed from home, along with answers to common questions. A patient hotline is also available for emergent needs of patients, parents and the caregivers of patients.

## Delivery Recommendations

There are several approved ways that you can use medical cannabis in New York:

### Vaporizer

Vaporizers gently heat medical cannabis oils until they evaporate and can be inhaled. It is important with your first use that you take a very short

gentle “puff” from the vaporizer. You should then wait at least 10 minutes to feel the effects. At that point you can again take another slightly longer “puff”. It is important to wait for sufficient time after each inhalation to be certain you do not take too much. Also, all vaporizers have some amount of leakage. To minimize leakage, avoid extreme temperatures, removing battery frequently, and any rough handling.

## Oral Solutions/ Tinctures

Solutions and tinctures are medical cannabis liquids that can be placed in the mouth and either swallowed or absorbed in the moist membranes of the mouth itself. **It can take up to 2-3 hours for these medicines to take full effect, so you should wait three hours before taking another dose.** Often, because of the delay to effect, patients do not believe the first dose is working, so they take another. Unfortunately, these doses add up over time, and the patient becomes over-medicated and has a higher risk of side-effect.

## Pills/Tablets/Capsules

These types of medicine, like the liquids, take a long time to enter your system and take effect.

They also last for a long time. **You should wait at least 3 hours before taking another dose as a general rule.**



## Be Safe & Sensible.

When using any sort of medicine that could have effects on your mental clarity, it is best to take great caution before driving or performing other complex tasks that could be dangerous.

**“Start Low and Go Slow”** when it comes to how much medicine you take, and see how the medicine affects you. Especially at first, dose your medications in a safe place with responsible adults present. Talk to your doctor and your patient care center pharmacist about questions.

**When in doubt — ASK.**