



Cannabinoid Hyperemesis Syndrome: Information for Patients and Caregivers

You were told you have Cannabinoid Hyperemesis Syndrome. This is called CHS. CHS is an illness caused by using cannabis, also called marijuana.

- CHS makes you feel very sick
- It causes bad stomach pain
- It causes nausea and vomiting
- More people are getting CHS

What is CHS?

CHS happens in people who use cannabis and then get sick again and again. The sickness includes nausea, vomiting, and stomach pain.

This happens because of THC. THC is the main chemical in cannabis.

CHS is sometimes called

- Weed sickness
- Scromiting, which means screaming and vomiting at the same time
- Cannabis poisoning

Symptoms often happen in stages

- Nausea starts mild and gets worse over time. Some people use more cannabis to feel better. This makes symptoms worse.
- Stomach pain starts light and becomes very strong. Some people also feel anxious.
- Vomiting lasts for days. Regular nausea medicine often does not help.

How did my doctor know I have CHS?

Your doctor looked at

- Your symptoms
- Your physical exam
- Your cannabis use

CHS can look like other illnesses, such as food poisoning, a stomach bug, or even appendicitis.

Your doctor may have done tests to rule out other problems. Tests might include blood tests, urine tests, or imaging. They may also test for cannabis or other substances.

What causes CHS?

Doctors are not completely sure why CHS happens. Cannabis affects parts of the brain and stomach that control nausea and digestion. In some people, cannabis stops these systems from working right, which leads to nausea, vomiting, and pain.



Why did I get CHS and other people don't?

No one knows exactly why some people get CHS and others do not. A few things may play a role:

- Stronger cannabis products
- Differences in how people's bodies process cannabis

Some people use cannabis for years without any problems. Others may get CHS even after using it for a short time. Most people with CHS have used cannabis for at least a year.

How is CHS treated?

Regular nausea medicine often does not work. Your doctor may give you other medicines that work better for this condition.

Some people are so sick that they need to stay in the hospital to get:

- IV fluids (to prevent dehydration)
- Medicine through an IV

You should drink plenty of liquids, such as:

- Water
- Electrolyte drinks
- Juice mixed with water
- Ice pops
- Soup

Many people with CHS feel better after taking hot showers.

Stopping cannabis is the only real cure. Most people feel better in about 2 weeks, but symptoms can last longer.

Can I get CHS again?

Yes. CHS can come back if you start using cannabis again. There is no known safe amount of cannabis for people who have had CHS.

How can I prevent CHS?

The only way to prevent CHS is to stop using cannabis.

This can be hard, especially for people who use cannabis to help with:

- Pain
- Anxiety
- Depression

But cannabis can actually make these problems worse over time.

There are safer treatments that work well. Talk to your doctor about other options.



If stopping feels hard, ask for help. Talk to your doctor or use the resources provided.

Resources:

- Call 988 for Suicide and Crisis LifeLine
- CommCARE 1-888-279-8188
- Rediscover Youth Behavioral Health Urgent Care Clinic: 816-416-8417

When should I get medical help?

Call your doctor if you:

- Cannot keep liquids down
- Have not peed in more than 12 hours
- Have muscle cramps or feel weak

Go to the Emergency Department if you:

- Vomit bright green (bile) or red/brown (blood tinged-) fluid
- Feel dehydrated (dizzy, very tired, peeing less)
- Feel extremely tired or exhausted
- Have chest pain or feel a fast or skipping heartbeat

Resources for adolescents who are fighting substance use disorder

Hotline Numbers:

- First Call: MO: 816-361-5900, KS: 913-233-0747
- EPICC: MO: 816-412-9417
- Heartland RADAC KS: 800-281-0089
- Adolescent Treatment Search: [Home - FindTreatment.gov](#)

Missouri Adolescent Treatment Options:

- Preferred Family Healthcare: Outpatient and Inpatient Treatment options in various locations in Missouri.
 - Kansas City: 816-474-7677
 - Website: <http://www.pfh.org>
- Crittenton Children's Center: Outpatient Treatment for substance use
 - 816-765-6600
 - Website: <https://www.saintlukeskc.org>

Kansas Adolescent Treatment Options:

- Johnson County Mental Health Adolescent Center for Treatment: Outpatient and Inpatient Treatment for substance use:
 - Overland Park Phone: 913-782-0283
 - Website: <https://www.jocogov.org/substance-use/>
- KU Addiction Services: Medication Assisted Recovery
 - 913-588-6493
 - Website: <https://kansashealthsystem.com/care/specialties/addiction-psychiatry>