



# Factum

## Consumption of Marijuana Likely to Increase in Canada with Many Saying They'll Light Up After Legalization

### Survey Suggests Some Canadians May Turn to Cannabis Instead of Alcohol or Tobacco

**Toronto, Ontario, September 26, 2017** — A new Ipsos poll for Global News has found that many Canadians appear to be more open to trying marijuana once it becomes fully legalized, and some might even drink less or smoke tobacco less often and instead turn to marijuana. The Canadian Federal government has pledged to legalize marijuana by mid-2018; however, tensions are often high when getting into the weeds about how to legalize marijuana and the implications that legalization will have on Canadian consumption and society more broadly.

The chart below summarizes the landscape of current consumption in Canada.

Consumption Type	Users (frequent/regular/occasional)	Non-users
Smoke marijuana for recreational purposes	38% (6%/7%/25%)	62%
Consume marijuana edibles for recreational purposes	26% (3%/4%/19%)	74%
Smoke marijuana for medicinal purposes	25% (5%/7%/13%)	75%
Consume marijuana edibles for medicinal purposes	18% (2%/4%/12%)	81%
Smoke cigarettes or cigars	39% (13%/13%/13%)	60%
Drink alcoholic beverages	83% (8%/21%/54%)	17%

Millennials are more likely to smoke or consume different substances on a **frequent** or **regular** basis, including: smoking marijuana (27% vs 9% Gen X'ers/6% Boomers) or consuming marijuana edibles for recreational purposes (17% vs. 4% Gen X'ers/2% Boomers), smoking marijuana (25% vs. 10% Gen X'ers/5% Boomers) or consuming marijuana edibles for medicinal purposes (12% vs. 5% Gen X'ers/2% Boomers), as well as smoking cigarettes or cigars (32% vs. 31% Gen X'ers/19% Boomers).

The poll uncovered that a great deal of Canadians appear to be open to trying marijuana, especially for medical purposes, once it is legalized.

- Three in ten Canadians say that they would likely smoke marijuana (34%; 16% very/18% somewhat) or consume marijuana edibles (29%; 11% very/18% somewhat) **for recreational purposes.**

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- Three in ten Canadians also say that they would likely smoke cannabis (31%; 14% very/17% somewhat) or consume edibles (29%; 11% very/18% somewhat) **for medicinal purposes** once it becomes legal to do so.

Among those who never smoked marijuana recreationally, 6% say they are likely (2% very/4% somewhat) to try the drug once it becomes legalized. As well, 12% of non-users say that they are likely (3% very/9% somewhat) to experiment with marijuana edibles for recreational purposes in the future. Similarly, one in ten of those who have never used marijuana for medical purposes say they are likely (13%; 2% very/11% somewhat) to smoke medicinal marijuana, while nearly two in ten are likely (17%; 4% very/13% somewhat) to consume edibles for medicinal purposes, once legalized. In other words, the number of users in Canada is set to expand significantly.

Millennials are also more likely to say they would use marijuana in various forms, once legalized. This includes: smoking marijuana (55% vs. 35% Gen X'ers/20% Boomers) and consume marijuana edibles (52% vs. 28% Gen X'ers/14% Boomers) for recreational purposes, as well as smoke marijuana (48% vs. 29% Gen X'ers/22% Boomers), and consume marijuana edibles (41% vs. 27% Gen X'ers/22% Boomers) for medicinal purposes.

### Legalization of Cannabis Will Cause Some To Cut Back On Alcohol and Tobacco Consumption

While the legalization of marijuana is likely to increase the number of Canadians, overall, who are willing to try the drug, it could also have an impact the frequency of consumption of marijuana, as well as alcohol and tobacco use:

- One in ten (13%) say that they will consume more **marijuana for recreational purposes** once legalized.
- 6% of non-users will begin to smoke **marijuana for recreational purposes** once legalized.
- A similar proportion (14%) says that their **consumption for medicinal purposes** will increase.
- One in ten (14%) of those who have never tried it will begin to smoke **marijuana for medical purposes** once legalized.
- One in ten (10%) say they will smoke fewer **cigarettes or cigars**.
- 18% of frequent/regular smokers say they will **smoke fewer cigarettes or cigars** once marijuana is legalized, while 28% of occasional smokers said the same.
- 7% say they would be inclined to drink less **alcohol** once marijuana is legalized.
- Two in ten (18%) recreational marijuana users (frequently or regularly) will **consume less alcohol**, while two in ten (20%) say they will **smoke less cigarettes or cigars**, suggesting a move away from tobacco and alcohol, towards marijuana.

Millennials are also more likely to decrease their alcohol and tobacco consumption, as a result of the legalization of marijuana. One in ten (12%) Millennials also say that they will consume less alcohol (12% vs. 6% Gen X'ers/6% Boomers), while an additional one in ten (13%) say they will smoke fewer cigarettes or cigars (13% vs. 10% Gen X'ers/7% Boomers).

### Not All Canadians Want to Roll With Cannabis

Canadians are generally approving of the use of marijuana despite that it is still illegal – over half (55%: 25% strongly/30% somewhat) say they approve of their friends or family's use of the drug. Once it is fully legalized, Canadians are more likely (63%; 32% strongly/31% somewhat) to approve of their friends or family using cannabis.

Millennials are more likely to approve of marijuana use, despite it currently being illegal (68% vs. 54% Gen X'ers/46% Boomers), as well as approving of its when once being legal next year (78% vs. 60% Gen X'ers/55% Boomers). Some of those who currently

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disapprove of the consumption of marijuana will begin to approve of it once it is legal, with two in ten (22%; 3% strongly/18% somewhat) changing their tune as a result of legalization.

However, cannabis use is not something that all Canadians can roll with. Among those who currently do not use marijuana, most (77%) bluntly say it is because they are not interested. Fear is also preventing Canadians from using marijuana - 32% say they are concerned about potential negative strains on their health, and 5% say they are afraid of getting caught while it's still illegal. Other Canadians say that they don't consume marijuana out of respect for the current law (19%), while one in ten (14%) say they used marijuana in the past, but not anymore. Just 2% attribute their non-use to not knowing how to get marijuana, suggesting those who currently want it know how to get it, even though it remains illegal for the time being.

The poll also found that a majority of Ontarians approve of the provincial government's plan for the sale of marijuana in Ontario through an LCBO subsidiary – 59% (23% strongly/36% somewhat) say they support the strategy, while four in ten (41%) oppose (26% strongly/15% somewhat) the approach.

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*These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between September 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017, in a joint effort between Ipsos and Global News. For this survey, a sample of 1,001 Canadians aged 18+ from Ipsos' online panel was interviewed online. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within  $\pm 3.5$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadian adults been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.*

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