

What you need to know about Medical Marijuana

Missouri has approved the use of medical marijuana for appropriate patients who are residents of Missouri. There are still a lot of questions about medical marijuana. The internal medicine department of LSPG would like to help you understand the current state of medical marijuana in Missouri.

1) Is medical marijuana legal?

Medical marijuana is legal in Missouri for persons that obtain a Missouri medical marijuana patient identification card. Federally, marijuana is still illegal. Missouri residents that are found with marijuana in a state that has not legalized medical marijuana could be charged with possession of an illegal substance. Legal questions are best addressed by a lawyer.

2) Is medical marijuana safe?

More study is needed to fully answer this question but there are some risks with use including but not limited to: addiction, breathing trouble, intractable vomiting, dizziness, impaired memory/concentration, slower reaction times/impaired driving, worsening of mental health disorders (increased anxiety, depression or schizophrenic tendencies) and withdrawal with abstinence of use. Marijuana will interfere with certain drugs and may require close monitoring by your physician.

3) Is medical marijuana effective?

Again, more study is needed. Currently we know it is very effective for certain types of seizure disorders. There is some evidence it can help with pain and anorexia associated with cancer and cancer treatments. We recommend you talk to your physician if you feel that medical marijuana would be helpful treating your medical issues.

4) What are qualifying conditions in Missouri?

- Cancer
- Epilepsy
- Glaucoma
- Intractable migraines unresponsive to other treatment
- A chronic medical condition that causes severe, persistent pain or persistent muscle spasms, - including but not limited to those associated with multiple sclerosis, seizures, Parkinson's disease, and Tourette's syndrome
- Debilitating psychiatric disorders, including, but not limited to, post-traumatic stress disorder, if diagnosed by a state licensed psychiatrist
- Human immunodeficiency virus or acquired immune deficiency syndrome
- A chronic medical condition that is normally treated with a prescription medications that could lead to physical or psychological dependence, when a physician determines that medical use of marijuana could be effective in treating that condition and would serve as a safer alternative to the prescription medication
- A terminal illness

-In the professional judgment of a physician, any other chronic, debilitating or other medical condition, including, but not limited to, hepatitis C, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, inflammatory bowel disease, Crohn's disease, Huntington's disease, autism, neuropathies, sickle cell anemia, agitation of Alzheimer's disease, cachexia, and wasting syndrome.

5) How does a qualifying Missouri resident obtain a patient identification card?

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services website has excellent information on how to obtain a patient identification card as well as a list of qualifying conditions. Please go to this website for complete information:

<https://health.mo.gov/safety/medical-marijuana/how-to-apply-pi.php>

Part of the certification process requires a physician certification form. The internal medicine department of LSPG is willing to fill out physician certification forms for our current patients that meet appropriate criteria.

- 1) The applicant must have been an established patient with LSPG for at least 2 years. **Care with LSPG must have been established by June 30, 2017.** Any patients that began care with LSPG after June 30, 2017 do not qualify and we will not sign your form.
- 2) The applicant **must** have been treated for, or currently receiving treatment for, one of the qualifying conditions listed above. In addition, the patient must have failed or had a sub therapeutic response to conventional treatment.
- 3) The applicant must be at least 21 years old and a Missouri resident.
- 4) The form must be filled out and signed by a medical doctor. Our nurse practitioner is unable to fill out forms.

Your LSPG physician will require you to schedule an office visit to discuss appropriate use and risks of medical marijuana prior to filling out your physician certification form. **Patients currently taking opiate medication for pain will be closely monitored and will be required to taper down or off their opiate pain medications if they are going to proceed with use of medical marijuana to treat their pain.**

LSPG charges \$100 per physician certification form. LSPG will only fill out paper forms. We do not fill out forms online. You will need to print out the physician certification form and bring it to your appointment.

The form is available at this website:

<https://health.mo.gov/safety/medical-marijuana/pdf/physician-certification-form.pdf>

If you have already met with your physician and established a care plan involving medical marijuana you are able to drop your form off at the office for completion. Otherwise an office visit is required to complete the form. Please allow 5 business days for completion. The form fee will be due at the time the form is picked up from the clinic. You will need to upload the paper form to your medical card

online application as a pdf. If you do not have access to a scanner, you should be able to take a picture of your form and upload the image.

Be aware, once the form has been signed by your physician you have 30 days to complete and submit your application with the state of Missouri.