

# New York to allow medical marijuana as substitute to opioids

July 13 2018

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New York state is now allowing anyone prescribed an opioid to request medical marijuana instead.

The state's Department of Health announced details of the new policy Thursday. State Health Commissioner Howard Zucker says [medical marijuana](#) has been shown to be an effective pain treatment that doesn't carry the risk of addiction that comes with opioids. Zucker says that giving people an alternative to opioids is a critical step in the fight against the opioid epidemic.

The new policy already went into effect.

Other conditions that already make a person eligible for medical marijuana in New York include chronic pain, Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, epilepsy and [post-traumatic stress disorder](#).

As of Tuesday, more than 62,000 people signed up for the state's medical marijuana program.

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