

# Frequent cannabis users miss more workdays, research shows

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A new analysis of 46,499 employed adults in the United States, completed with data from the 2021–2022 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), found that recent and frequent cannabis use and

cannabis use disorder (CUD) were associated with greater workplace absenteeism. This included both absences due to illness/injury as well as skipped work days. Among full-time employed adults, 15.9% used cannabis in the past month, with 6.5% meeting criteria for CUD.

The study found that over the last 30 days, the mean number of workdays missed because of illness was 1.47 for people who didn't have CUD but had used cannabis within the past month. For those who had never used cannabis, the mean number of sick days was 0.95. While even infrequent cannabis use was associated with work absences, those with CUD had a 1.30–2.87 times higher incidence of missing or skipping work compared to those without CUD.

The study suggests that the impacts of cannabis on adults in the workplace extends beyond those who meet the criteria for CUD. However, the researchers emphasize the need for longitudinal studies examining the impact of cannabis use, as well as qualitative studies that can better parse out the effects of various compounding factors that were not accounted for in this study. These factors include medicinal cannabis use and whether participants used cannabis within or outside work hours.

The [study](#) published on August 26 in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* and was led by Kevin H. Yang, M.D., a third-year resident in the Department of Psychiatry at UC San Diego School of Medicine and Joseph J. Palamar, Ph.D, M.P.H, associate professor in the Department of Population Health at New York University Grossman School of Medicine.

**More information:** Kevin H. Yang et al, Cannabis Use, Use Disorder, and Workplace Absenteeism in the U.S., 2021–2022, *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* (2024). [DOI: 10.1016/j.amepre.2024.07.021](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2024.07.021)

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