

Canadian beliefs about the harms of tobacco, alcohol, vaping and cannabis.

March 2022

Since 2017, Health Canada has commissioned Advanis to conduct an annual survey on cannabis use (the Canadian Cannabis Survey). The survey has included the same questions about social acceptability and beliefs about harms of use of alcohol, tobacco, cannabis and nicotine. Data from the surveys is available on the website of Library and Archives Canada (www.porr-rrop.gc.ca).

This fact sheet presents data from the survey years 2018 to 2021 for questions related to social acceptability and likelihood of harm. Responses to these questions were provided for all users, and also for those who had used the substance in the past year and those who had not. Breakdown by sex and age was not provided.

Figure 1: Estimations of social acceptability (Tables 1a and 1b)

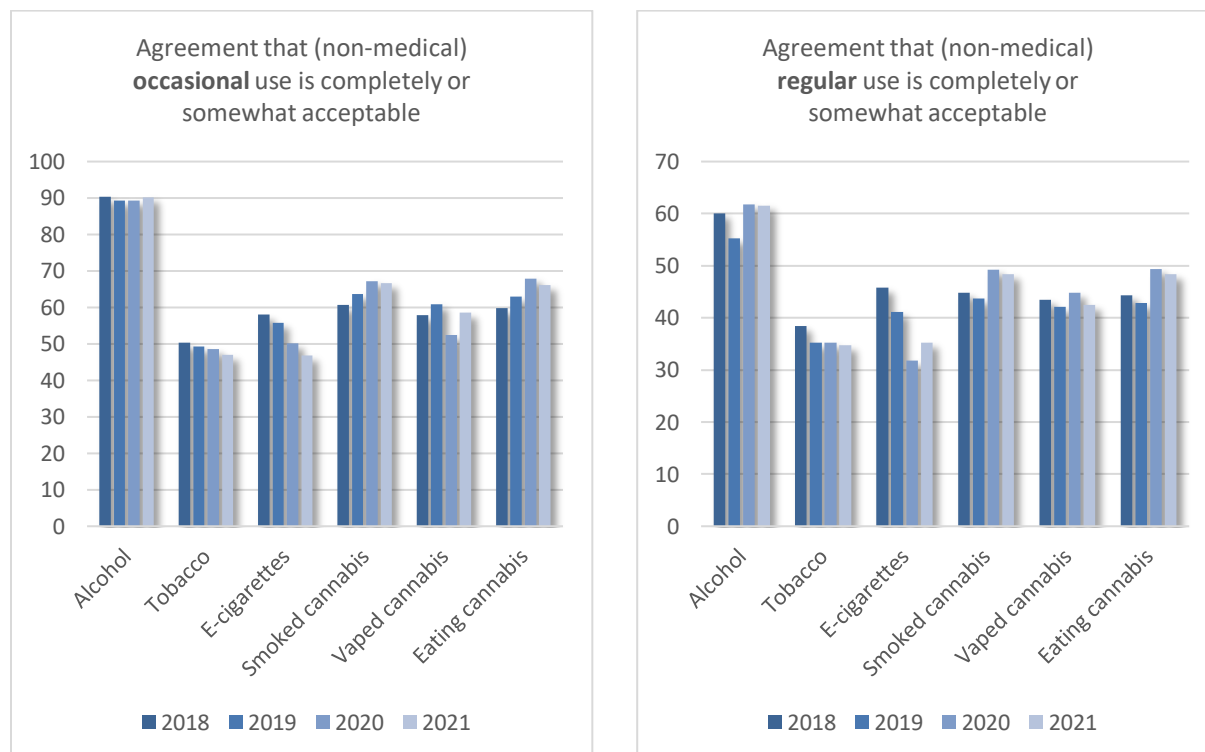


Figure 1: Estimations of risk (Table 2)

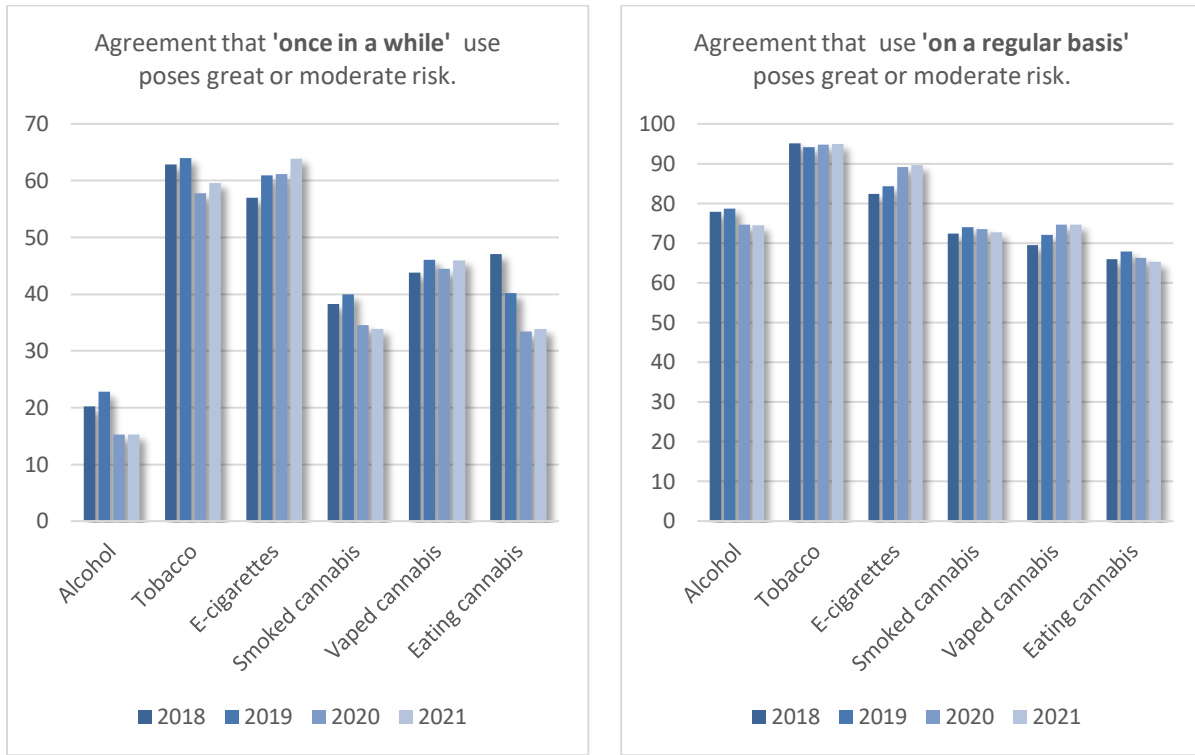
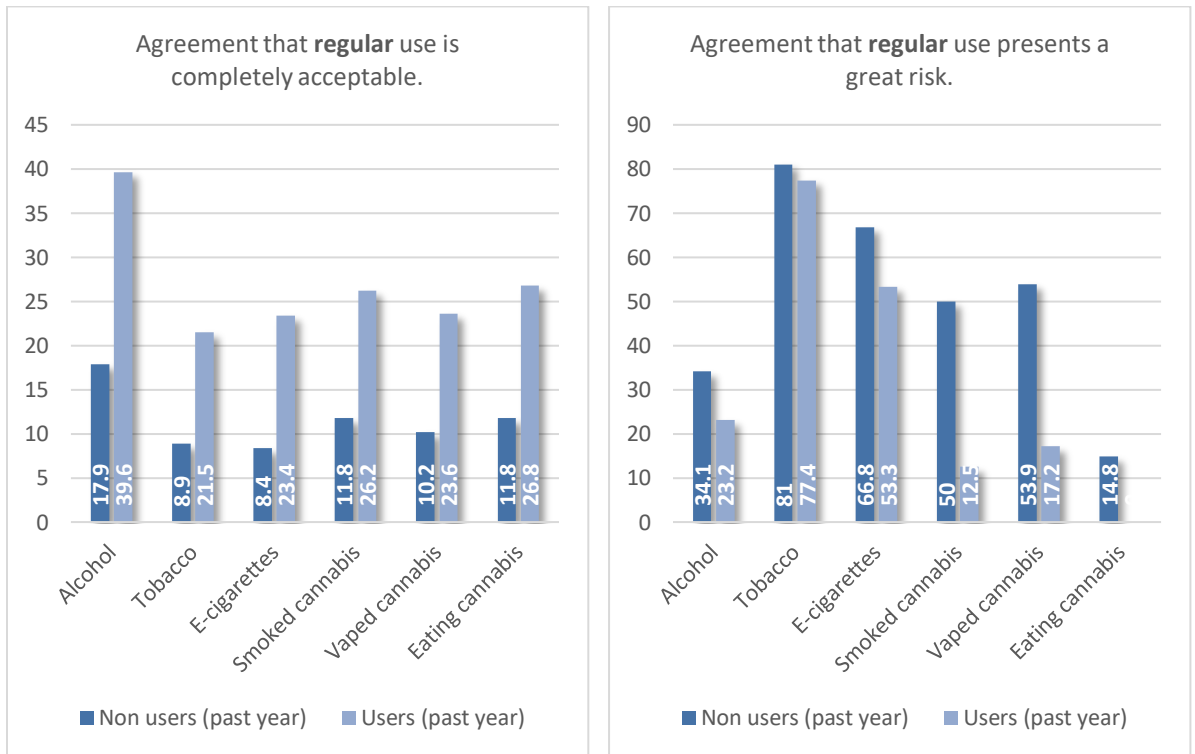


Figure 1: Estimations of acceptability and risk by substance use (data not in tables)



Information on data collection

Survey year	Research Number	Number of Respondents	Ages surveyed	Date in field
2018	POR 006-18	12,958	16 and over	May 18 to July 9, 2018
2019	POR 130 – 18	12,023	16 and over	April 4 to June 17, 2019
2020	POR 114-19	10 930	16 and over	April 30 to June 22, 2020
2021	POR 102-20	10,736	16 and over	April 7th to June 28, 2021

Table 1a. Social acceptability of OCCASIONALLY using various products

How socially acceptable do you think it is for a person to use the following substances occasionally?

	Completely Acceptable	Somewhat acceptable	somewhat unacceptable	completely unacceptable	No opinion	completely/somewhat acceptable	somewhat/completely unacceptable
All respondents	1	2	3	4	5		
2018							
Alcohol	56.7	33.6	4.8	3.5	1.3	80.3	8.3
Tobacco	20.4	30	24.9	22	2.6	50.4	46.9
E-cigarettes	25.4	32.6	20	17.9	4	58	37.9
Smoked cannabis (non-medical)	30.5	30.2	16	20.7	2.6	60.7	36.7
Vaping cannabis (non-medical)	28.8	29.1	16.8	21.8	3.5	57.9	38.6
Eating cannabis (non-medical)	30.6	29.3	15.4	21	3.8	59.9	36.4
2019							
Alcohol	54	35.3	5.4	3.7	1.6	89.3	9.1
Tobacco	18.6	30.6	26.4	21.9	2.3	49.2	48.3
E-cigarettes	23	32.8	22.1	18.7	3.4	55.8	40.8
Smoked cannabis (non-medical)	31.1	32.5	15.3	18.4	2.7	63.6	33.7
Vaping cannabis (non-medical)	30	30.9	16.4	19	3.6	60.9	35.4
Eating cannabis (non-medical)	31.9	31.1	15.3	18.2	3.5	63	33.5
2020							
Alcohol	57.7	31.6	5.1	3.7	1.9	89.3	8.8
Tobacco	19	29.5	26.9	21.6	3	48.5	48.5
E-cigarettes	20.7	29.5	23.7	21.7	4.5	50.2	45.4
Smoked cannabis (non-medical)	35.6	31.6	14.8	14.7	3.1	67.2	29.5
Vaping cannabis (non-medical)	20.8	31.6	20.2	22.1	5.4	52.4	42.3
Eating cannabis (non-medical)	37	30.8	14	14.3	3.9	67.8	28.3
2021							
Alcohol	58.2	31.9	4.7	3.5	1.6	90.1	8.2
Tobacco	17.4	29.6	26.5	23.5	2.9	47	50
E-cigarettes	18.5	28.4	23	26.2	3.9	46.9	49.2
Smoked cannabis (non-medical)	35.2	31.4	14.8	15.7	2.9	66.6	30.5
Vaping cannabis (non-medical)	29.5	29.1	16.7	20.3	4.3	58.6	37
Eating cannabis (non-medical)	35.4	30.8	14.2	15.9	3.8	66.2	30.1

Table 1b. Social acceptability of REGULARLY using various products

How socially acceptable do you think it is for a person to use the following substances regularly?

	Completely Acceptable	Somewhat acceptable	somewhat unacceptable	completely unacceptable	No opinion	completely/somewhat acceptable	somewhat/completely unacceptable
All respondents	1	2	3	4	5		
2018							
Alcohol	21.4	38.6	25.3	13.4	1.3	60	38.7
Tobacco	13.1	25.3	29.7	29.6	2.2	38.4	59.3
E-cigarettes	16.2	29.6	26.8	24.2	3.2	45.8	51
Smoked cannabis (non-medical)	17.8	27	24.1	29.1	2	44.8	53.2
Vaping cannabis (non-medical)	17	26.5	24.8	28.8	2.8	43.5	53.6
Eating cannabis (non-medical)	177	26.6	24.4	28.4	2.9	203.6	52.8
2019							
Alcohol	18.1	37.2	27.5	15.4	1.7	55.3	42.9
Tobacco	11.1	24.1	31.3	31.3	2.3	35.2	62.6
E-cigarettes	13.2	27.9	28.7	27.3	2.9	41.1	56
Smoked cannabis (non-medical)	16.2	27.5	26.4	27.8	2.1	43.7	54.2
Vaping cannabis (non-medical)	15.1	27	27.3	27.9	2.7	42.1	55.2
Eating cannabis (non-medical)	15.5	27.3	27.1	27.1	2.7	42.8	54.2
2020							
Alcohol	22.1	39.7	24.7	11.2	2.3	61.8	35.9
Tobacco	11.6	23.6	32.4	29.5	2.8	35.2	61.9
E-cigarettes	8.4	23.4	31.3	33	3.2	31.8	64.3
Smoked cannabis (non-medical)	19.9	29.3	267.1	22	2.8	49.2	289.1
Vaping cannabis (non-medical)	17.6	27.2	27.5	24	3.7	44.8	51.5
Eating cannabis (non-medical)	19.7	29.7	26.3	20.7	3.5	49.4	47
2021							
Alcohol	22.4	39.1	24	12.4	2.2	61.5	36.4
Tobacco	10.4	24.3	31.1	31.4	2.8	34.7	62.5
E-cigarettes	11.1	24.1	28.9	32.6	3.3	35.2	61.5
Smoked cannabis (non-medical)	19.2	29.2	25.3	23.7	2.6	48.4	49
Vaping cannabis (non-medical)	16.4	26.1	26.2	27.8	3.5	42.5	54
Eating cannabis (non-medical)	19.2	29.2	25.5	22.9	3.3	48.4	48.4

Table 2. Risks associated with use, all respondents

How much do you think people risk harming themselves when they do each of the following activities?

All respondents	No risk	Slight risk	Moderate risk	Great risk	Don't know	no or slight risk	Moderate or great risk
	1	2	3	4	5		
2018							
Drink alcohol once in a while	31.6	47.1	16.3	3.9	1.2	78.7	20.2
Drink alcohol on a regular basis	2.3	19	42	35.9	0.7	21.3	77.9
Smoke tobacco once in a while	6	30.4	38.4	24.4	0.8	36.4	62.8
Smoke tobacco on a regular basis	1.2	3.2	14.1	81	0.5	4.4	95.1
Use an e-cigarette with nicotine once in a while	6.7	31.4	37.4	19.6	5	38.1	57
Use an e-cigarette with nicotine on a regular basis	2.4	10.3	30.1	52.3	4.9	12.7	82.4
Smoke cannabis once in a while	22.3	37.2	24.8	13.5	2.1	59.5	38.3
Smoke cannabis on a regular basis	7.9	17.7	28.3	44	2.2	25.6	72.3
Vaporizing cannabis once in a while	17.6	33.1	26.9	16.9	5.4	50.7	43.8
Vaporizing cannabis on a regular basis	8.2	16.9	27	42.5	5.4	25.1	69.5
Eating cannabis once in a while	14.2	33.4	27.2	19.9	5.3	47.6	47.1
Eating cannabis on a regular basis	10.9	18.3	26.4	39.6	4.9	29.2	66
2019							
Drink alcohol once in a while	28.9	46.7	18.4	4.4	1.7	75.6	22.8
Drink alcohol on a regular basis	2.3	18	41.8	36.9	1	20.3	78.7
Smoke tobacco once in a while	6	28.8	40	24	1.1	34.8	64
Smoke tobacco on a regular basis	1.5	3.5	14	80.1	0.8	5	94.1
Use an e-cigarette with nicotine once in a while	5.9	28.8	39.6	21.3	4.4	34.7	60.9
Use an e-cigarette with nicotine on a regular basis	2.3	9.2	28.4	55.9	4.2	11.5	84.3
Smoke cannabis once in a while	20.1	37.9	27.1	12.8	2.2	58	39.9
Smoke cannabis on a regular basis	6.1	17.7	29.2	44.8	2.3	23.8	74
Vaporizing cannabis once in a while	15.4	33.6	29.1	16.9	5	49	46
Vaporizing cannabis on a regular basis	6.3	16.8	27.9	44.1	4.9	23.1	72
Eating cannabis once in a while	20	35.3	25.4	14.8	4.5	55.3	40.2
Eating cannabis on a regular basis	8.5	18.9	27.8	40	4.8	27.4	67.8
2020							
Drink alcohol once in a while	34.6	4.7	12.9	2.4	2.1	39.3	15.3
Drink alcohol on a regular basis	2.2	21.8	43.3	31.4	1.4	24	74.7
Smoke tobacco once in a while	6.6	34.1	37.9	19.9	1.6	40.7	57.8
Smoke tobacco on a regular basis	1.1	3	14.8	80	1.1	4.1	94.8
Use an e-cigarette with nicotine once in a while	5.1	29.7	38	23.2	4	34.8	61.2
Use an e-cigarette with nicotine on a regular basis	1.1	5.9	25.8	63.4	3.7	7	89.2
Smoke cannabis once in a while	21	42.1	24.5	10	2.4	63.1	34.5
Smoke cannabis on a regular basis	5.3	18.8	33	40.5	2.5	24.1	73.5
Vaporizing cannabis once in a while	13.8	36.3	28.2	16.3	5.3	50.1	44.5
Vaporizing cannabis on a regular basis	4.4	15.3	30.1	44.6	5.4	19.7	74.7
Eating cannabis once in a while	22.7	39.6	22	11.4	4.3	62.3	33.4
Eating cannabis on a regular basis	8.5	20.7	31.6	34.7	4.5	29.2	66.3

	No risk 1	Slight risk 2	Moderate risk 3	Great risk 4	Don't know 5	no or slight risk	Moderate or great risk
All respondents							
2021							
Drink alcohol once in a while	35	48	12.8	2.4	1.8	83	15.2
Drink alcohol on a regular basis	2.4	21.9	44.1	30.3	1.2	24.3	74.4
Smoke tobacco once in a while	5.8	33.2	39.9	19.7	1.3	39	59.6
Smoke tobacco on a regular basis	9	3.3	13.5	81.4	1	12.3	94.9
Use an e-cigarette with nicotine once in a while	4.5	28	37.6	26.3	3.6	32.5	63.9
Use an e-cigarette with nicotine on a regular basis	1.2	6.1	23.5	66.1	3.2	7.3	89.6
Smoke cannabis once in a while	21	42.8	23.6	10.3	2.2	63.8	33.9
Smoke cannabis on a regular basis	5.5	19.6	32.1	40.6	2.3	25.1	72.7
Vaporizing cannabis once in a while	13.4	35.1	27.4	18.5	5.5	48.5	45.9
Vaporizing cannabis on a regular basis	4.5	15.4	28	46.7	5.3	19.9	74.7
Eating cannabis once in a while	22.6	38.9	22.2	11.7	4.5	61.5	33.9
Eating cannabis on a regular basis	8.9	21.1	29.7	35.6	5.1	30	65.3

Funding for this report was provided by Health Canada's Substance Use and Addictions Program (SUAP) The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of Health Canada