

# Understanding Patterns and Perceptions of Cannabis Use Among Cancer Survivors

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## INTRODUCTION

- Cannabis use is rising among the general public and cancer populations, and it is expected to continue to increase<sup>1,2</sup>
- The impact of cannabis on cancer treatment efficacy and toxicity remains unclear<sup>3,4</sup>
- Despite the lack of strong scientific evidence, many patients with cancer report positive attitudes toward cannabis and its ability to alleviate cancer-related symptoms<sup>5</sup>
- Currently reported cannabis use among patients with cancer is not up-to-date and patient beliefs about cannabis are not well understood<sup>2</sup>
- Developing an understanding of cannabis use and cannabis perceptions is important in cancer care

## OBJECTIVES

- To determine the current and projected cannabis use rates among adult cancer survivors
- To determine the risk perceptions associated with cannabis use among adult cancer survivors

## METHODS

- Cross-sectional survey study was conducted across ambulatory outpatient clinics at the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre (Toronto, Canada)
- Convenience sampling from July to August 2023

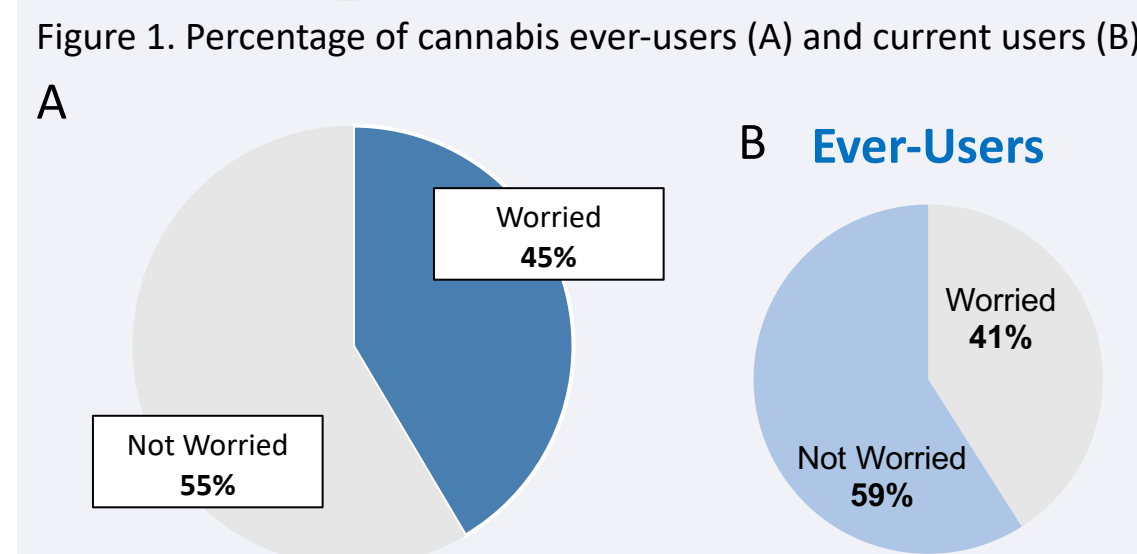
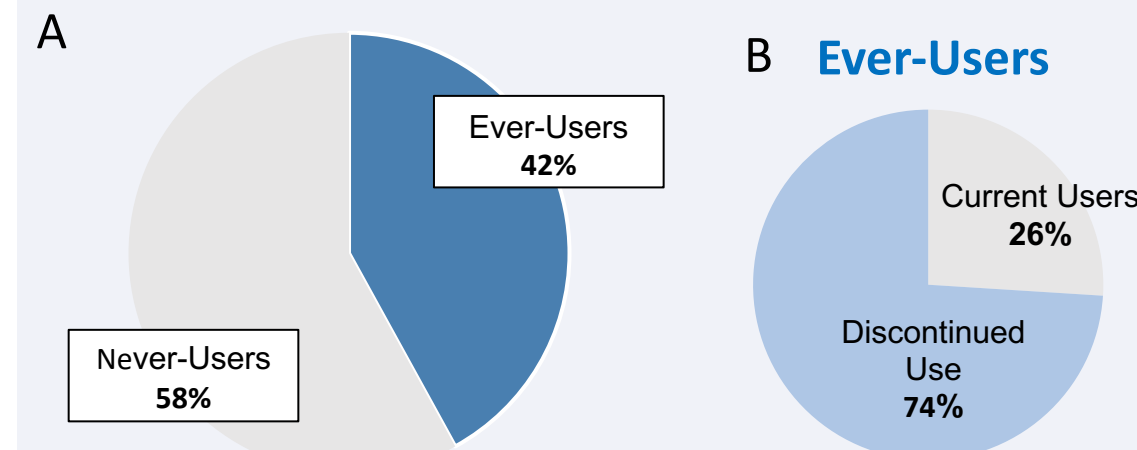
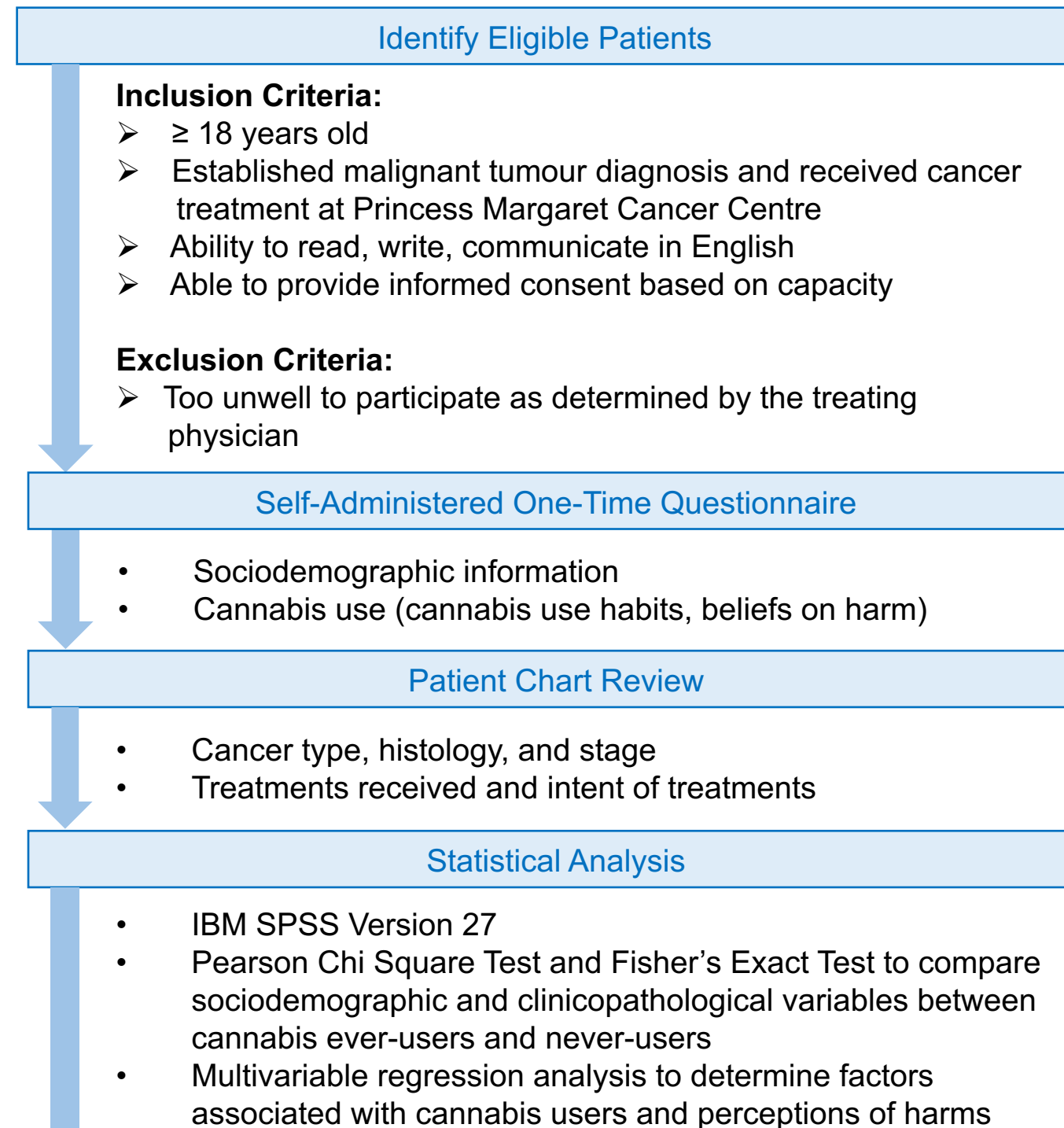


Figure 2. Percentage of participants that worry about the health impacts of cannabis (A) and worry among cannabis ever-users (B)

Variable	Sub-Group	All (n=243)	Ever-Users (n=106)	Never-Users (n=128)	P Value
<b>Sociodemographic Variables</b>					
Age	Mean ± SD	63 ± 16	59 ± 20	66 ± 21	0.122
Gender	Male	52%	62%	52%	0.100
<b>Race</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>&lt; 0.001</b>
<b>Work Status</b>	<b>Not Full-Time</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>0.004</b>
Employment	White Collar	70%	70%	70%	0.947
<b>Language</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>&lt; 0.001</b>
Marital Status	Married	66%	63%	68%	0.414
<b>Education</b>	<b>&gt; High School</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>0.006</b>
<b>Income</b>	<b>&gt; \$80,000</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>0.004</b>
<b>Smoking Status</b>	<b>&gt; 100 Cigarettes Lifetime</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>&lt; 0.001</b>
<b>Clinicopathological Variables</b>					
Eastern Cooperative Oncology Group Performance Scale	0 - 1	89%	89%	89%	0.870
	2+	11%	11%	12%	0.870
Treatment Intent At Diagnosis	Palliative	28%	22%	33%	0.054
Treatment Intent At Follow-Up	Palliative	40%	34%	44%	0.115
Treatments Received					
Surgery	Received	42%	43%	42%	0.912
Radiation Therapy	Received	52%	50%	54%	0.590
Systemic Therapy	Received	71%	73%	69%	0.575

Table 1. Summary of sociodemographic and clinicopathological variables comparing cannabis ever-users and cannabis never-users

## RESULTS

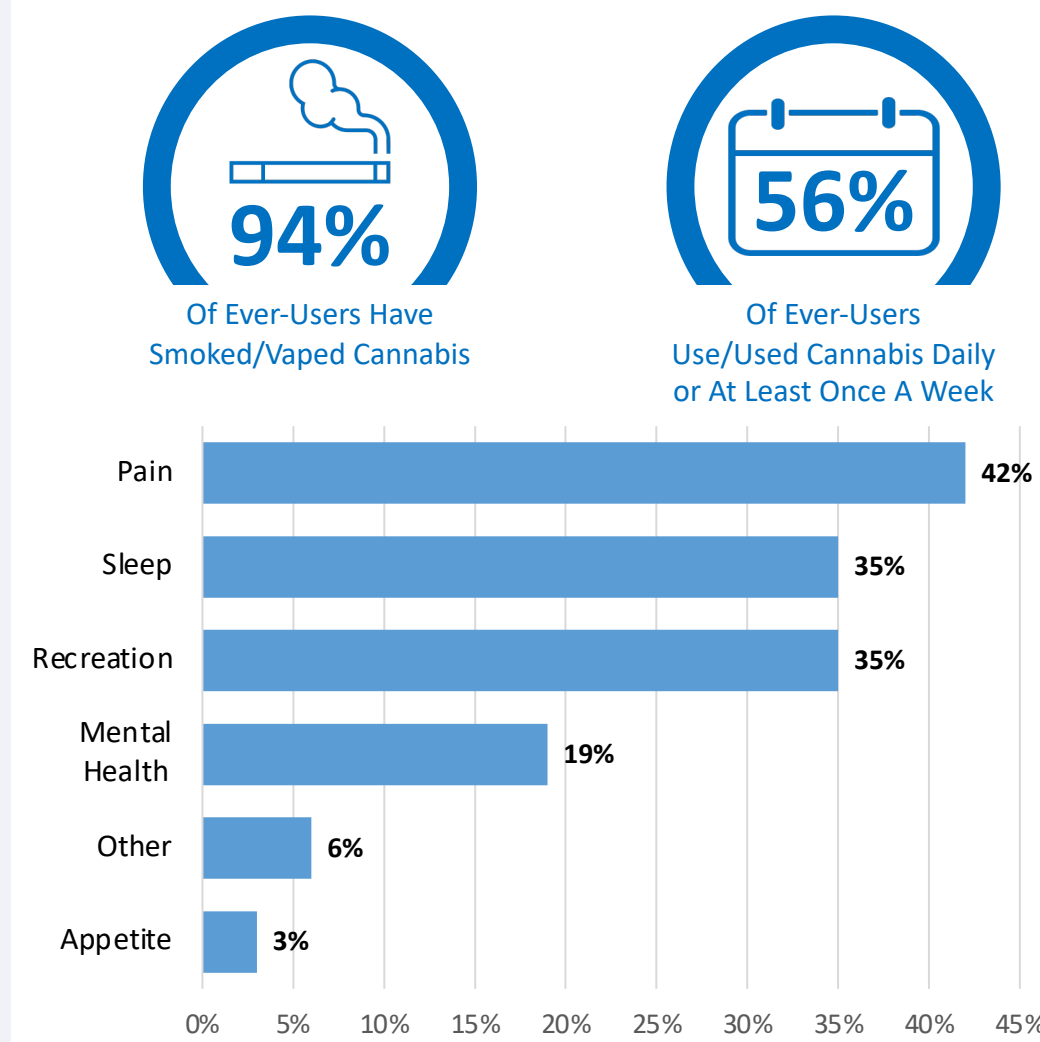


Figure 3. Summary of reasons for cannabis use

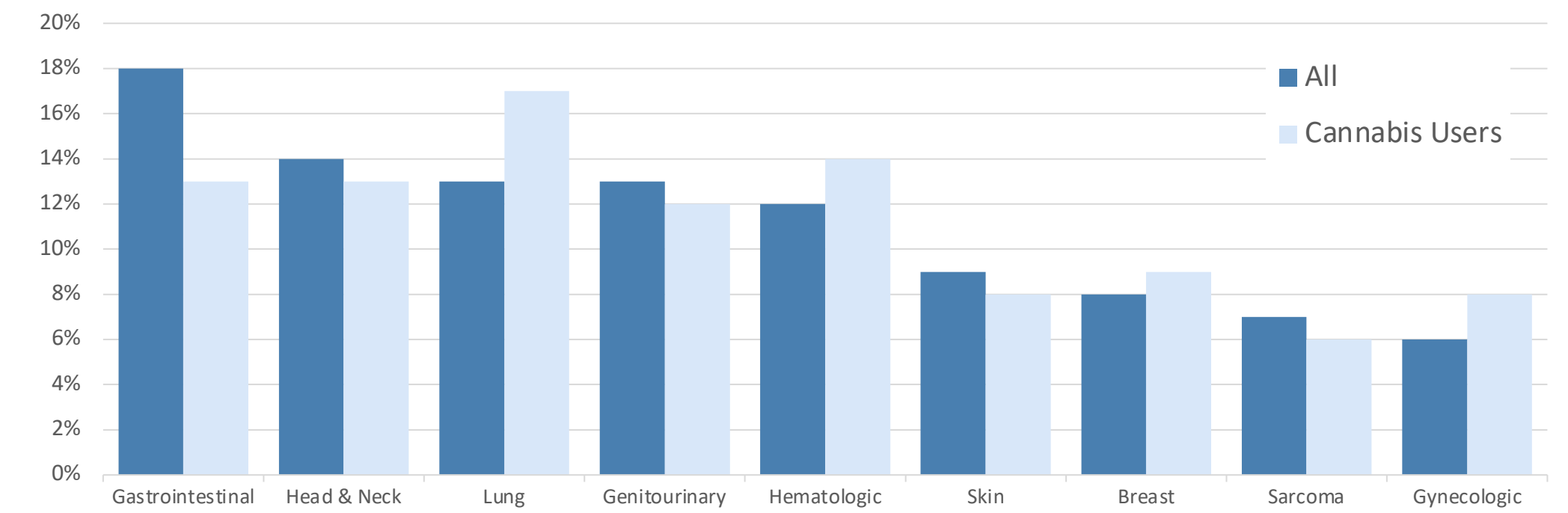


Figure 4. Distribution of disease sites among all participants and participants of self-reported cannabis use

Variable	Comparison	Univariable Analysis		Multivariable Analysis	
		OR (95% CI)	P Value	aOR (95% CI)	P Value
Age	Per Year Increase	0.97 (0.95-0.99)	< 0.001	0.94 (0.92-0.97)	< 0.001
Race	Other vs White	0.29 (0.16-0.55)	< 0.001	2.94 (1.03-7.69)	0.029
Language	English vs Other	8.33 (3.57-19.4)	< 0.001	5.13 (1.62-16.31)	0.006
Income	< \$80K vs > \$80K	0.42 (0.23-0.77)	0.005	6.16 (1.80-21.08)	0.004
Smoking	Ever vs Never	4.02 (2.32-6.97)	< 0.001	5.68 (2.48-13.02)	< 0.001

Table 2. Univariable and multivariable regression analysis results on the association of sociodemographic variables on ever cannabis use

Variable	Comparison	Univariable Analysis		Multivariable Analysis	
		OR (95% CI)	P Value	aOR (95% CI)	P Value
Smoking	Ever vs Never	0.447 (0.254-0.785)	0.005	1.866 (1.023-3.404)	0.042

Table 3. Univariable and multivariable regression analysis results on the association of sociodemographic variables on worry about the health impacts of cannabis

## CONCLUSIONS

- Almost half of patients with cancer have used cannabis for medical and non-medical indications
- Patients with cancer who were younger, of Caucasian race, primarily spoke English at home, had an income greater than \$80K and smoked tobacco were more likely to have used cannabis
- Patients with cancer who have a previous history of smoking tobacco are more worried about the health impacts of cannabis and have a greater perception of harm
- Tailoring cannabis educational resources toward patients with cancer who are more likely to use cannabis and those who are unaware of cannabis harms may be beneficial
- Future research exploring the impact of cannabis on cancer outcomes is required

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