



# Cannabis basics

BY **NGAIO BEALUM** / [ask420@newsreview.com](mailto:ask420@newsreview.com)

**This may seem kind of random and simple, but here is my question: What is the best way to smoke pot?**

This is a great question. Stoners have argued and debated about the best way to smoke weed for decades. Each method has its pros and cons.

Bongs are great for big giant lung-busting hits, although contrary to popular myth, the water doesn't really filter out many toxins. Bongs can also be messy (freshly spilled bong water is the worst) and a pain in the keester to keep clean.

Joints (my personal favorite) are a tad wasteful, although they are easy to use (and easy to eat if you are in a place where marijuana is still illegal) and they taste great! Some folks complain about the taste of the paper, but there are plenty of upscale rolling paper brands that burn clean and are virtually ash-free. Also, if you drop a joint on the sidewalk, it probably won't shatter into a million pieces.

Pipes are probably the most convenient way to smoke cannabis, and they are my preferred method for fancy-pants weed tasting. My friend Michael Backes, author of *Cannabis Pharmacy: The Practical Guide to Medical Marijuana*, recommends a good hit from a clean glass pipe as the most efficient and cleanest way to smoke cannabis. He also says that you don't have to hold your breath. One good inhale and exhale should give you exactly what you need.

So now you know. But really there is no wrong way to smoke cannabis. It's all good.

**Hey do you know if THC or CBD will interact with any of the other medications I am using?**

Good question. Let us begin with the usual disclaimer: *I am not a doctor.* You should

probably discuss this with your health care professional.

I know weed can have a stigma: Kaiser Permanente won't let you apply for certain mental health programs if you test positive for weed, but most doctors (at least on the West coast) have had to learn to be a little more understanding about cannabis use.

That acceptance brings new questions and concerns. For instance, a new study published in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology* claims that cannabis can increase the effects of certain blood thinners like warfarin and can also increase the effects of drugs used to control

blood pressure. What happens is the liver uses the same enzymes to process the statins that it does to process THC, thereby increasing the strength of the statins and blood thinners. Now, this is a small study and more research is needed, but if you are on blood pressure medication, you should definitely talk to your doctor about your cannabis use.

It's the same with CBD.

According to Aaron Cadena from CBDorigin.com, THC and CBD should be treated like grapefruit juice when it comes to checking for interactions and contraindications. Hope that helps. Have a good one. □

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Ngaio Bealum is a Sacramento comedian, activist and marijuana expert. Email him questions at [ask420@newsreview.com](mailto:ask420@newsreview.com).



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