

## Cannabis use patterns among older adults before and after recreational legalization in California

Zac Carlson, Steven Pham, Jackie El-Sokkary, Dorie Apollonio, PhD.

### INTRO

Marijuana was approved for medicinal use in California in 1996, and approved for recreational use in 2018. Legalization of medical cannabis has increased its use by adults, particularly among seniors, an effect not observed among adolescents. In this study we reviewed cannabis use patterns among "Baby Boomers" in California with the aim of assessing their rates of return to use. We hypothesized that their return to use rate increased after the legalization of commercial recreational cannabis.

### METHODS

1. The California Health Interview Survey (CHIS) is the nation's largest state survey service that asks a range of survey questions surrounding general health, and overall livelihood across the state of California.
2. The combined sample size in the 2017 and 2018 collection cycles consisted of 42,330 adults. Out of this data we were able to separate boomers from the general population. From these two groups we wanted to assess ever use, quitting patterns, and recent use (last month) of cannabis.
3. Using STATA programming we were able to run a linear regression to predict risk factors that lead to cannabis use. Additionally we were able to compare the use patterns of the general population to Boomers.

# Although more people in California used cannabis after recreational retail sales were legalized in 2018, Baby Boomers did not change their consumption.



Take a picture to get the full paper

**UCSF**  
University of California  
San Francisco

### RESULTS

	Odds ratios		
	Baby Boomers	General Population	All Adults
Ever used cannabis	1.10	1.12	1.11**
Used cannabis in the last 30 days	1.22	1.25**	1.24**
Quit using cannabis	0.81	0.85*	0.86**

\*p<0.05; \*\*p<0.01

### CONCLUSION

1. We observed an immediate shift in use patterns in the general California population; a larger share of the population reported ever using cannabis or using within the past 30 days, and a smaller share reported having quit 15 or more years earlier.
2. There was no change in frequency of cannabis use in the Baby Boomer population.
3. We identified fewer factors associated with cannabis use among Baby Boomers compared to the general population, a concern for screening individuals who may face increased health risks associated with their use.

University of California, San Francisco  
School of Pharmacy  
Funded by the National Institute of Health 