GETTING A DOCTOR’S CERTIFICATION

If you think medical marijuana might be helpful in improving your quality of life, the first step is to get certified by a qualified physician.

Medical marijuana can help with a variety of symptoms and conditions. It’s really up to you and your doctor to decide. There are plenty of great doctors in Massachusetts that understand how medical marijuana can be helpful for you.

SEEING A DOCTOR

1. Your family doctor or a specialist is a good place to start. Be straightforward. Explain why you feel medical marijuana can be helpful and ask if he/she is willing to certify you. It should be no different than discussing other potential treatment options with your doctor.

2. Your doctor may not yet be educated on the benefits of medical marijuana. If he/she can’t certify you, you can search the internet for “MA Medical Marijuana Doctors” to find doctors that specialize in and understand medical marijuana treatments.

3. Once you decide on a doctor, it’s time to call and schedule an appointment for your visit.

YOUR VISIT

Your doctor’s office will let you know what to bring to your first visit. Most likely, you’ll need to send or bring your relevant medical records. You will have time to ask questions about medical marijuana and how it can best work for your needs. Ask all the questions you can think up. Don’t be shy! At the end of your visit, your doctor will decide whether or not to certify you, and for how long. A certification allows you to move to the next step, which is registering with the state. Your doctor’s office will initiate the registration process, and you will receive an email with next steps to complete your registration from the MA Department of Public Health.

WHAT’S NEXT?

Now that you have been certified by your doctor you will need to register with the state’s Medical Use of Marijuana Online System. You will automatically receive an email from the MA Department of Public Health (DPH) with your PIN number to log-in and instructions on how to register once your doctor has processed your certification. Also, check out NETA’s Patient Registration Guide for step-by-step registration instructions.

COST

1. An initial visit with a medical marijuana specialist can cost between $100 and $250 and is not usually covered by insurance. This may be lower if you can prove a financial hardship, if you are a veteran or if you have a disability. Make sure to ask if you can apply for any discounts.

2. Your certification can last up to 1 year, but you may be certified for a shorter time period. It’s wise to make a follow up appointment about 2 months before your certificate expires. Follow up appointments usually cost between $50 and $150.

3. Once you’re certified, the state requires an annual $50 fee to be registered as a patient.
## MAINTAINING PATIENT STATUS

### KNOW YOUR EXPIRATION DATES

1. **Doctor’s Certification**

   Your doctor can certify you to use medical marijuana for any amount of time between 15 days and one year. Don’t let your certification expire. You’ll want to make an appointment with your certifying doctor about 2 months before your expiration date.

2. **State Registration**

   Your registration in the state’s Medical Use of Marijuana Program expires annually, regardless of your certification date. You may re-apply for registration, on an annual basis, up to 60 days before the date that your registration expires using the state’s MMJ online system.

   **NOTE:** If there is any change to the information you submitted for registration (i.e. name, email, address, or phone number), you must update this information within 5 business days after the date of this change.

3. **Patient ID Card**

   Check the expiration date on your patient ID card once you receive it. The card itself may have a separate expiration date from your actual registration. Renew your card before it expires using the state’s MMJ online system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KNOW THE EXPIRATION</th>
<th>TYPICAL LENGTH</th>
<th>WHERE TO FIND THE EXP. DATE</th>
<th>HOW TO RENEW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctor’s Certification</td>
<td>3-12 months</td>
<td>Certification paperwork; MMJ online system</td>
<td>Schedule an appointment with your certifying doctor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Registration</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>MMJ online system</td>
<td>Login to the MMJ online system up to 60 days before your expiration date to re-register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration Card</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>On your registration card</td>
<td>Login to the MMJ online system up to 60 days before your expiration date to re-register</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NETACARE.ORG

**NETACARE.ORG**

NETACARE.ORG