

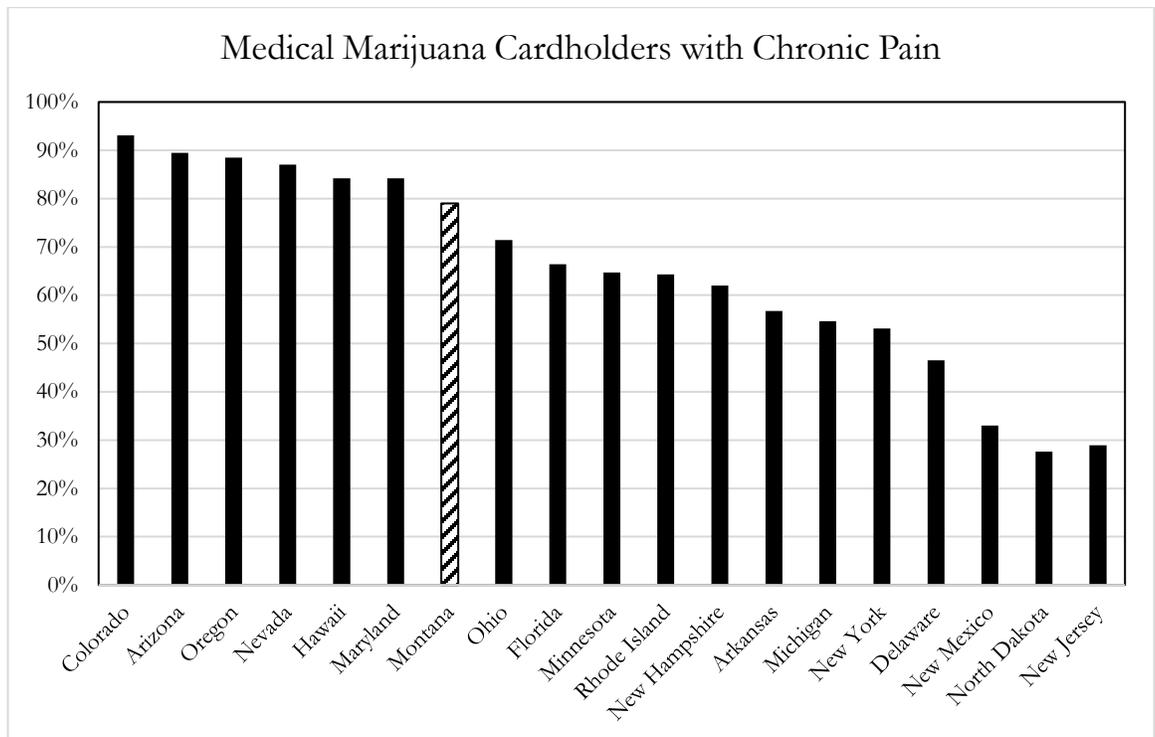
MEDICAL MARIJUANA ACT CHRONIC PAIN RATES IN OTHER STATES

BACKGROUND

The December 2019 statistics for Montana's medical marijuana registry showed that 79% of the people using marijuana for a debilitating medical condition are doing so because of severe chronic pain. The Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee asked staff to research how this statistic compared to other states with medical marijuana programs.

CHRONIC PAIN CARDHOLDERS

The chart below shows the percentage of medical marijuana cardholders in 19 states who have received cards for severe or chronic pain, based on the most recent statistics available in each state. Not all states with medical marijuana programs collect those statistics or make them public. The chart shows information only for the states where data was available.



HOW DOES MONTANA STACK UP?

As of October 2019, 33 states and the District of Columbia allowed the use of marijuana for a broad range of medical conditions. Another 13 states allowed use of low-tetrahydrocannabinol products for a limited number of conditions. This paper includes information only from Montana and 18 other states that allow use for a chronic pain category that appeared comparable to Montana's category and for which data on medical conditions was available.

In 15 of the 19 states, more than half the cardholders had listed chronic pain as a medical condition for using marijuana. Six states had a higher percentage of chronic pain cardholders than did Montana.

Washington state is not included in the count of states because it doesn't require adult medical marijuana users to register with the state. However, data compiled by the state shows that chronic pain is the most commonly listed reason for obtaining a certification for adult medical marijuana users who voluntarily register with the state.¹

DOES RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA CHANGE THE PICTURE?

Five of the states for which information was available also have legalized the recreational use of marijuana. In four of those states, more than 80% of the medical marijuana cardholders had received their cards for chronic pain.

The table below shows the percentage of chronic pain patients and status of recreational marijuana in the 19 states.

State	Chronic Pain %	Recreational Use
Colorado	93.1%	X
Arizona	89.5%	
Oregon	88.5%	X
Nevada	87%	X
Hawaii	84.2%	
Maryland	84.2%	X
Montana	79%	
Ohio	71.4%	
Florida	66.4%	
Minnesota	64.7%	
Rhode Island	64.3%	
New Hampshire	62%	
Arkansas	56.7%	
Michigan	54.6%	X
New York	53.1%	
Delaware	46.5%	
New Mexico	33%	
North Dakota	28%	
New Jersey	28.9%	

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¹ E-mail from Shelly J. Rowden, Washington State Department of Health. Feb. 19, 2020.