



# Prevalence and Correlates of Cannabis Use among U.S. Veterans during the Second Wave of the COVID-19 Pandemic

MAJ Laura Manzo, MSN, MBA, Sayantani Sarkar, PhD, Hermine Poghoysan, MPH, PhD



## INTRODUCTION

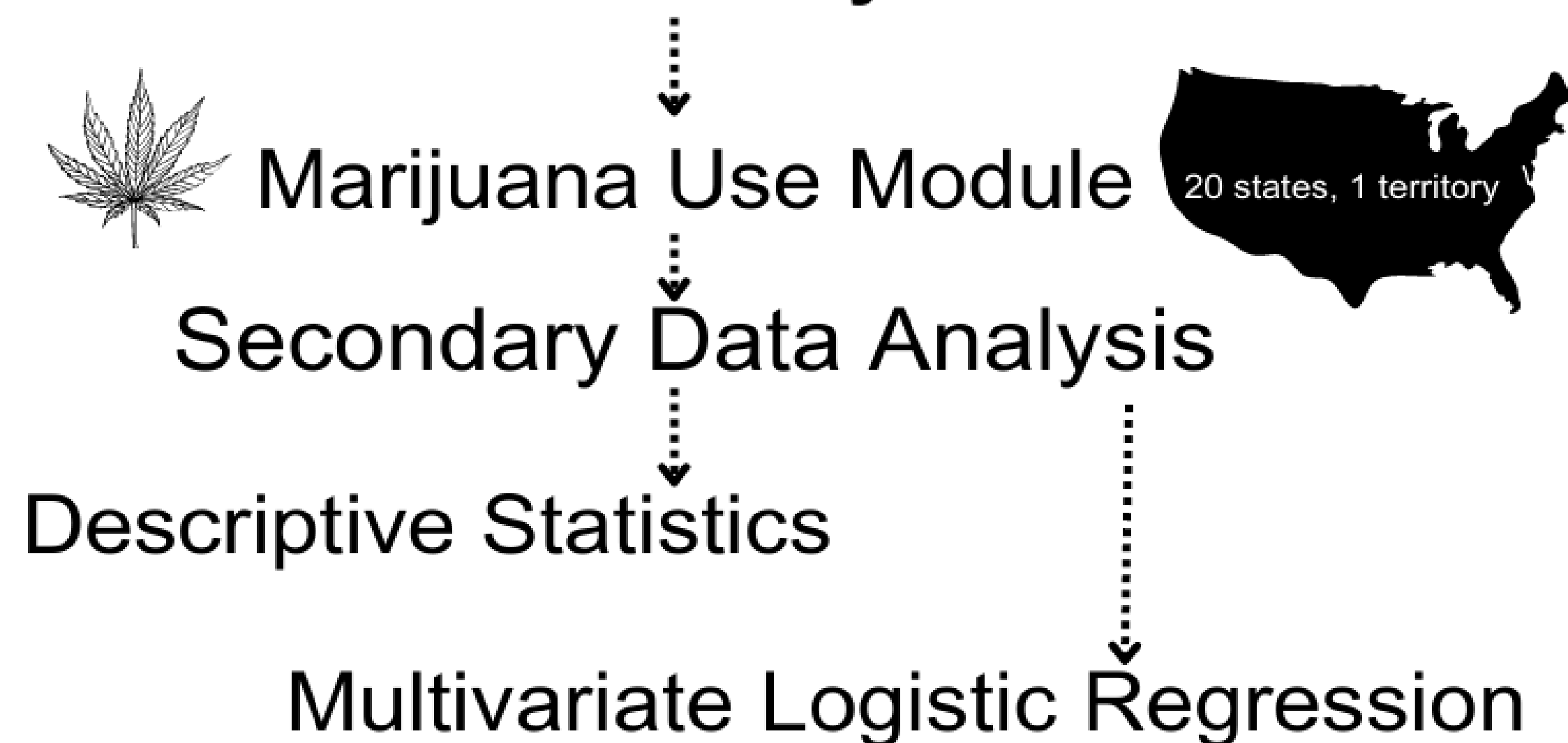
- Cannabis is the most commonly used federally illegal drug in the US
- In 2020 there were 49.6 million users in the US
- Cannabis can produce health benefits as well as adverse health effects

## PURPOSE

- To estimate the prevalence of past 30-day cannabis use (CU) among veterans
- To identify individual level correlates associated with CU among veterans and evaluate the reasons for CU

## METHODS

Data source: **2021 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System**



## RESULTS



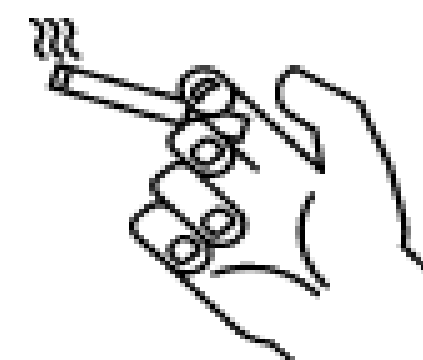
Binge Drinking  
AOR 3.18, p=.0000



Urban Residence  
AOR 1.51, p=.0015



Non-Hispanic Black  
AOR 1.89, p=.0070



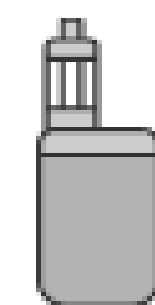
Smoking Status  
Current: AOR 3.54, p=.0000  
Former: AOR 1.78, p=.0001



**CU Prevalence: 8.5%**  
CU Reasons: Medical 30.4%  
Both Medical and Non-medical 43.8%  
Non-medical: 25.8%



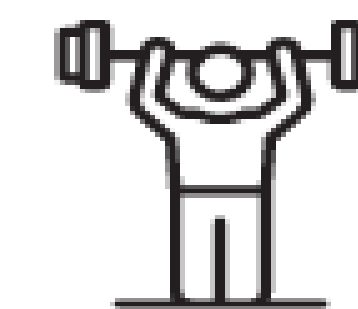
1-13 Poor Mental Health Days in last 30 days  
AOR 2.35, p=.0000



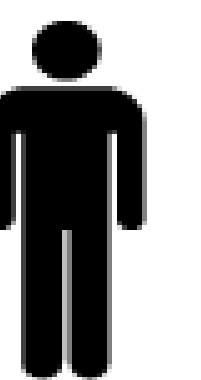
E-cigarette Use  
AOR 3.37, p=.0000



3+ Comorbid Conditions  
AOR 1.83, p=.0120



1-13 Poor Physical Health Days in last 30 days  
AOR 1.67, p=.0040



Male  
AOR 1.52, p=.0047

## SAMPLE

- Non-institutionalized veterans ≥ 18 years
- Residents of 20 states and 1 territory
- Final sample: 11,398
- **Findings generalizable to 2.96 million veterans**

## CONCLUSIONS

- CU is prevalent among veterans with certain subpopulations more likely to engage in CU
- Risk of co-use with other substances
- Need to screen veterans for CU with alcohol and tobacco use
- Future research needed to determine health effects of CU in veterans