



GENDER DIFFERENCES IN CANNABIS CONSUMPTION

April 2015

Abstract

A look at cannabis product usage habits among cannabis enthusiasts and how they vary by gender.

Gender Differences in Cannabis Consumption

Executive Summary

Among cannabis enthusiasts, several key usage differences exist between men and women. While there is virtually no difference in their usage habits when it comes to more popular consumption methods (flower, concentrates, hash), products with lesser overall usage such as topicals, edibles, and mints or gum skew toward heavier female usage. This indicates an opportunity to market these types of products to a subset of female consumers.

Lead Analysts

Lisa Schulte
Melissa Stock

Key Questions

- What is driving usage gaps between male and female cannabis enthusiasts?
- Why are women less likely to agree that vaporizers are a healthier method for consuming cannabis?
- Why do CBD users exhibit even greater gender differences than those using cannabis products containing THC?

Key Findings

Current Usage Behaviors:

For this study, cannabis *enthusiasts* were surveyed about their usage habits. Enthusiasts are frequent consumers of cannabis and cannabis-related media in the industry.

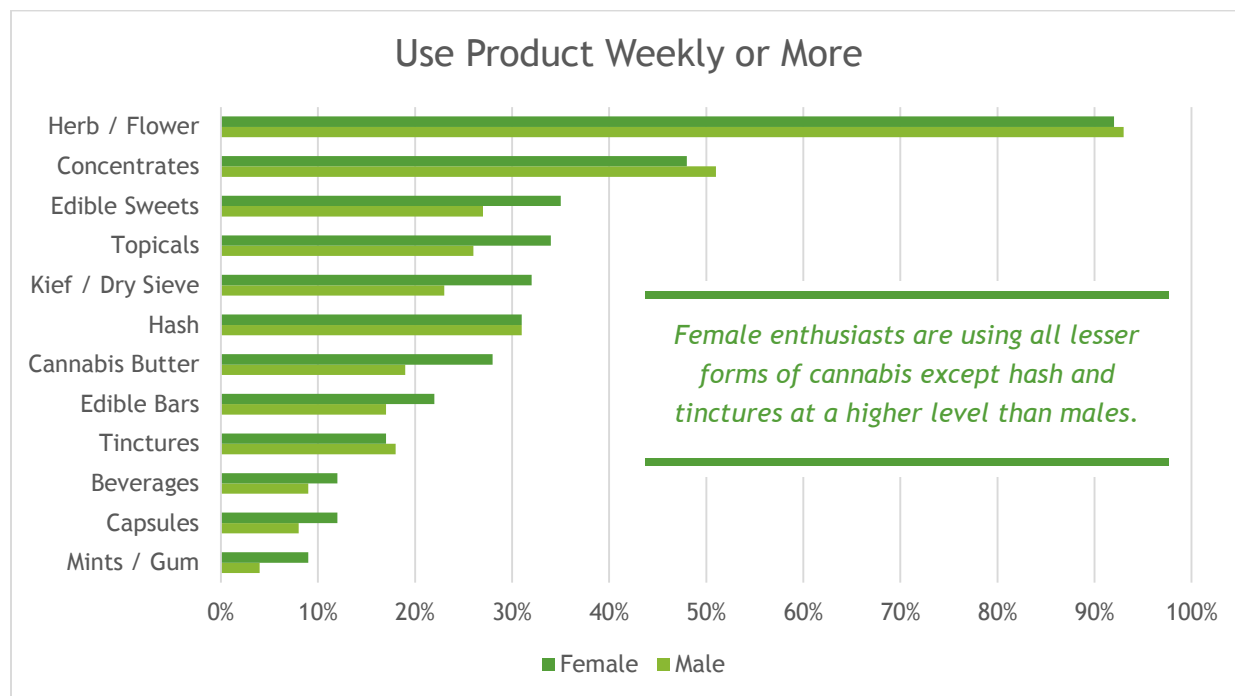
- The vast majority say they use cannabis for both medicinal and recreational purposes;
- 60% reside in a state with medical legalization;
- 27% in a recreational legal state; and
- 13% in a state that has not yet legalized.

The leading form of cannabis used by enthusiasts, both male and female, is herb/flower, with four in five stating that they smoke herb/flower at least once per day and over 90% using at least once per week. Usage patterns are similar between genders for other top forms such as concentrates (oil, wax, shatter, etc.) and hash, with the former being used at least once a week by 57% overall and the latter by 31%. Additionally, vaporizer usage is at parity among the two genders, with approximately two-thirds using a vaporizer at least “sometimes.”

Despite similar patterns across genders for the more popular cannabis forms, consumption patterns for less frequently used products skews in favor of females. Most prominent is cannabis in a topical form, which over three quarters (78%) of female enthusiasts have tried and over a third are using at least once a week. In comparison, fewer than two-thirds of males (64%) have tried topicals and just over a quarter are using at least once a week. Other forms that exhibit directionally higher usage frequency among females are edible sweets (35% vs. 27% using at least once per week), cannabis butter (28% vs. 19%), and edible bars (22% vs. 17%).

Though overall usage is low, use of cannabis mints and gum also skews female. 9% of females use these types of products at least once a week as opposed to just 4% of males.

Chart A: Weekly Product Usage



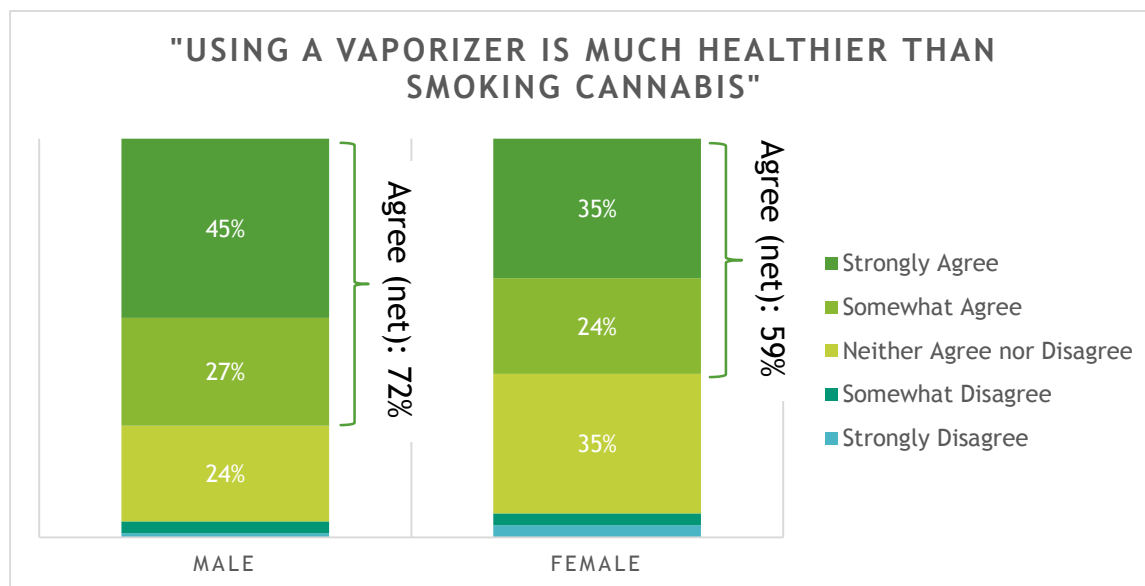
Vaporizer Usage and Attitudes:

Although vaporizer use is consistent across genders, significant differences exist in vaporizer health perceptions between males and females. Males are much more likely to agree that using a vaporizer is much healthier than smoking cannabis (72%), while only 59% of female enthusiasts say the same. However, women do not alternately believe smoking is a healthier choice; they simply appear skeptical that vaporizer use is a healthier alternative.

While females don't agree that vaporizers are healthier than smoking, they also don't disagree, indicating that there may be overall skepticism to the health of any inhalation products.

The data suggests that women are turning to topical and edible forms at a higher rate and we believe that this is in part due to their desire for a healthier alternative that will have a lesser impact on their overall health.

Chart B: Vaporizer Usage Attitudes



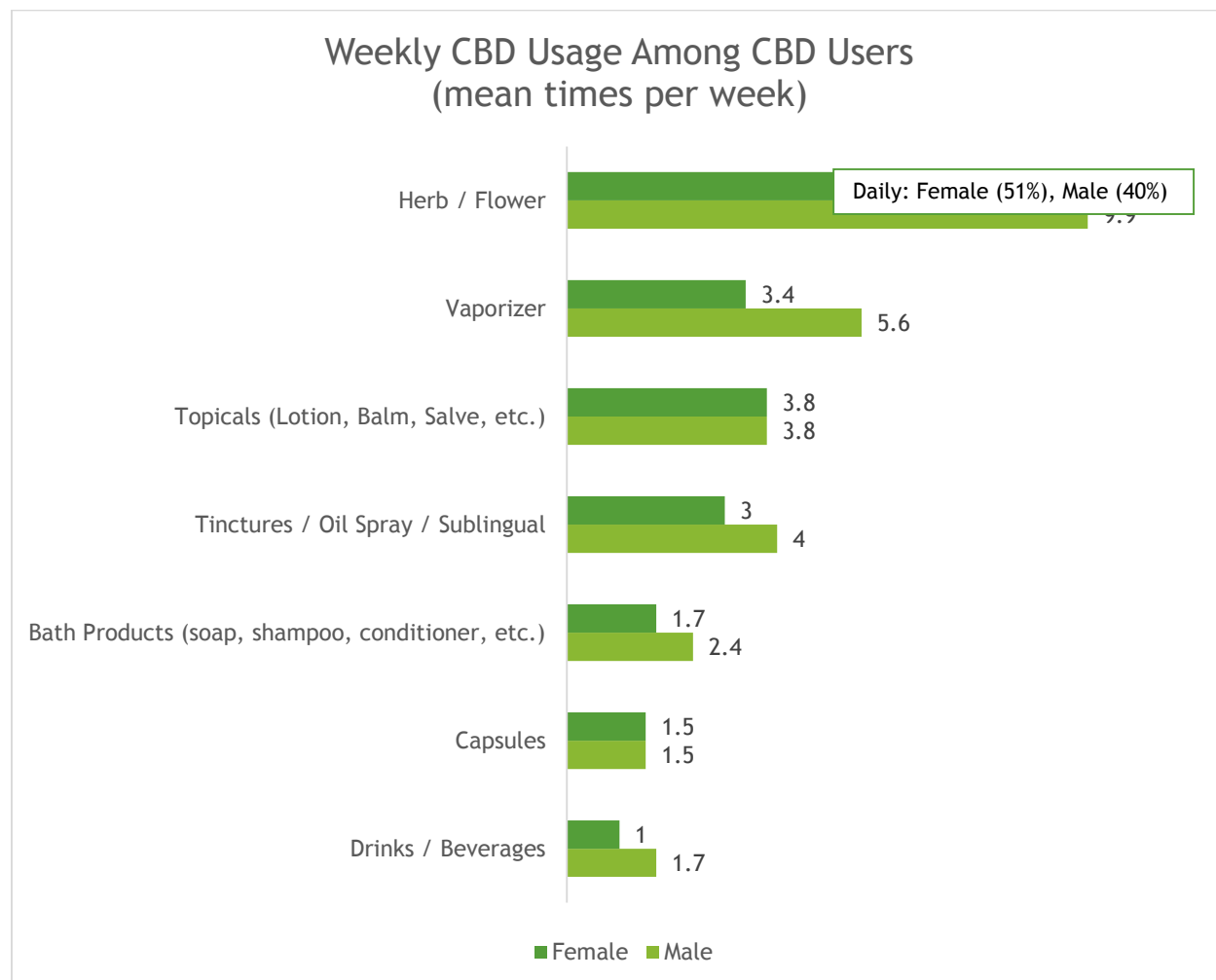
CBD Usage:

While both genders demonstrate usage of CBDs at parity, frequency among females is much lower, especially when it comes to inhaled products. Similar to cannabis products, herb/flower is the most frequently used type of CBD across genders. Frequency of usage differs in that male users indicate smoking herb/flower CBD an average of 10 times per week, compared with females who smoke only 7 times per week.

Secondary forms of CBD products further enforce the gender preferences noted previously; vaporizers are the second most used CBD product among males, while females more often use topical products. Males are using vaporizers twice as frequently as females in an average week (6 times vs. 3 times).

Although topical use doesn't see a significant difference in frequency overall (both use an average of 4 times a week), 51% of females use more than once a week vs. 40% of males (Chart C: CBD Product Usage Frequency).

Chart C: CBD Usage Frequency



Conclusions:

Current consumption habits of females indicate a market for cannabis products that provide an alternative to smoking. Expanding product diversity and marketing alternative forms to women may reach a segment of consumers with an interest in non-smoking options. Skepticism that vaporizers are a healthy alternative to smoking indicates that those who do have concerns about smoking may be more likely to try out a product that is not inhaled such as edibles or topicals. These types of products could serve as an entry point into the category for current non-users.

Non-inhaled products also provide a strong opportunity for incremental sales among current cannabis users. Though female consumers are less prevalent in the category overall, female enthusiasts are using medicinally and recreationally at slightly higher rates than their male counterparts. Medicinal usage among female enthusiasts averages 14.8 times per week (14.4 among males) and recreational use is at 9.3 times a week (vs. 8.3 among males). Since over 90% of female enthusiasts say they smoke cannabis flower at least once a week, most usage of topicals, edibles, etc. is done in addition to smoking. Making sure there are options available aside from flowers could increase overall spending among female consumers.



Verabis

A division of Praxi

www.verabis.net

Contact:

P: 303.679.6300

E: info@verabis.net