

History of Cannabis, its use as medicine, and prohibition

20 million years ago – Cannabis pollen shows up in fossil record, Tibetan plateau

12,000 years ago – First evidence of human using cannabis seeds and hemp, East Asia

10,000 years ago – Genomic studies suggest domestication of cannabis, East Asia

3,500 years ago – Used for inflammation, pain, and skin disease, Ancient Egypt and India

2,500 years ago – First evidence of smoking cannabis for ritual/psychotropic use, China

2,000 years ago – Used for constipation, inflammation, and pain, China and Greco-Romans

1,000 years ago – Used for headaches, ear infections, skin/joint disease, Persia and Europe

150 years ago – Used for convulsions, pain, antispasmodic, sedative, Europe and USA

Cannabis was listed as a medicinal herb in the US pharmacopeia from 1850 – 1942

- 1930 – HJ Anslinger appointed as Commissioner of new Federal Bureau of Narcotics
 - 1930 - 1963 – Anslinger remained Commissioner of FBN for 30+ years
 - Encouraged harsh penalties, discredited/slandered dissenters (ie. NYAM)
 - Grouped cannabis with narcotics, which it clearly is not
- 1933 – FDR takes office, alcohol prohibition ends, FBN makes cannabis new target
 - Anslinger used racist inflammatory language to gain support.
 - Reportedly, 19 out of 20 scientists Anslinger questioned told him cannabis was not dangerous. He instead chose to present the one scientist's opinion (that agreed with him) to the public.
- 1937 – Marihuana Tax Act (backed by Anslinger): buried businesses in paperwork and tax regulations, discouraged use of cannabis as a prescribed medicine.
- 1942 – Cannabis removed from US pharmacopeia
- 1951 – Boggs Act: Established mandatory minimums (punishment) for drug crimes
- 1956 – Narcotics Control Act: Further expanded prosecutorial reach/punishments
- 1970 – Controlled Substances Act: Established scheduling system, schedule 1
- 1971 – Nixon declares “War on Drugs”
- 1973 – DEA created
- 1986 – Anti-Drug Abuse Act: New mandatory minimums
- 1996 – California Prop 215: First state medical-cannabis legalization
- 2012 – First adult-use legalization, Colorado and Washington