



Plant Medicine Contraindications

& Considerations

A clear, caring reference for psilocybin and San Pedro, with a note on LSD: the health conditions, medications, and life circumstances that call for a pause, extra care, or a conversation.

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START HERE

How to use this guide

Every body, history, and medication list is different. This guide gathers the considerations that matter most so you can walk into a conversation with your provider, or with me, already informed. Each item carries one of these labels:

Avoid

Risks outweigh potential benefits. Not recommended.

Caution

May be possible with medical guidance and extra care.

Discuss

Usually not a safety risk, but worth talking through; often affects how well it works.

✦ Why dose changes the picture

	MICRODOSING	FULL-DOSE JOURNEY
What you feel	Subtle, below the threshold of feeling “high”	Profound shifts in perception, emotion, and sense of self
Physical load	Minimal for most people	Noticeable rise in heart rate and blood pressure, more so with San Pedro; nausea is common
Emotional intensity	Low; difficult material may surface gradually	High; experiences can feel overwhelming without preparation
Interaction risk	Lower, but not zero; frequent use adds up	Higher; some combinations are dangerous
Support	Self-directed with education and check-ins	Screening, a trained facilitator, and integration support

A “no” for a full journey isn't always a “no” for microdosing, and a “yes” for microdosing isn't a green light for a journey. Ongoing, frequent use also brings its own considerations, which you'll find noted throughout.

MIND & MOOD

Mental health considerations

Psychedelics work directly with perception and emotion, so your mental health history is the most important part of screening. None of this is about judgment. It's about timing and support.

CONSIDERATION	MICRO	FULL DOSE	WHY IT MATTERS
Personal history of psychosis or schizophrenia	Avoid	Avoid	May trigger or worsen psychotic symptoms
Bipolar I	Avoid	Avoid	Risk of triggering mania
Bipolar II	Caution	Avoid	Watch closely for hypomania; involve your care team
Close family history of psychosis or bipolar I	Caution	Avoid	Inherited vulnerability raises risk
Active suicidal thoughts or a recent crisis	Avoid	Avoid	Reach out for support first; call or text 988
Trauma or PTSD	Discuss	Caution	Memories can surface; trauma-informed support helps
Anxiety or panic	Discuss	Caution	Some feel calmer, others more activated at first
Substance use history	Discuss	Discuss	Supportive for some, destabilizing for others; honesty with your provider matters

Feeling worse, not better? Stop and reach out.

Signs to take seriously: racing thoughts, needing much less sleep, paranoia, or feeling unreal or detached for long stretches. Pause your practice and contact your provider.

Fireside Project psychedelic peer support: call or text 62-FIRESIDE.

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: call or text 988 in the U.S.



MEDICATIONS & SUBSTANCES

What you're already taking matters

MEDICATION / SUBSTANCE	PSILOCYBIN	SAN PEDRO	WHAT TO KNOW
Lithium	Avoid	Avoid	Seizures have been reported in combination with psychedelics
Tramadol	Avoid	Avoid	Lowers seizure threshold; serotonergic
MAOIs, incl. Syrian rue & ayahwasca vine	Avoid	Avoid	Can intensify and prolong effects; with mescaline, possible blood pressure spikes
SSRIs / SNRIs	Discuss	Discuss	Often blunt effects; serotonin syndrome risk is low but not zero
Tricyclic antidepressants	Caution	Caution	May intensify effects
Antipsychotics	Discuss	Discuss	Usually dampen effects; why you take them matters most
Stimulants, incl. ADHD meds	Caution	Caution	Added load on the heart, more so with San Pedro
Benzodiazepines	Discuss	Discuss	Can dampen effects
St. John's Wort, 5-HTP, SAMe	Caution	Caution	Serotonergic supplements add up
Alcohol & cannabis	Caution	Caution	Make effects less predictable; cannabis can intensify

Never taper on your own

Stopping a psychiatric medication to microdose can cause withdrawal or relapse. Any change happens with your prescriber, on their timeline.

Check your interactions

spiritpharmacist.com: Ben Malcolm, psychedelic pharmacist consults.

BODY

Physical health considerations

CONSIDERATION	PSILOCYBIN	SAN PEDRO	WHAT TO KNOW
Heart disease, arrhythmia, or high blood pressure	Caution	Caution	San Pedro raises heart rate and BP more noticeably; get medical clearance
Heart valve disease	Caution	Caution	Long-term frequent use has a theoretical link to valve changes; still being studied
Seizure disorders	Caution	Caution	May lower seizure threshold in some people
Pregnancy, trying to conceive, or breastfeeding	Avoid	Avoid	Not enough safety data
Liver or kidney conditions	Caution	Caution	Affects how your body processes the medicine
Sensitive stomach, ulcers, or reflux	Note	Caution	San Pedro commonly brings nausea
Under 21	Avoid	Avoid	The brain is still developing; also outside Colorado's legal framework
Upcoming surgery or anesthesia	Discuss	Discuss	Tell your care team and pause beforehand

✦ Medicine-specific notes

Psilocybin

- Misidentified wild mushrooms can be deadly.
- Potency varies by species and batch.
- Some people notice mild stomach upset or headaches.

San Pedro

- Nausea, and sometimes purging, is common.
- A very long arc; plan for a full day.
- Ornamental cacti may carry pesticides.
- Wild harvesting harms native populations.





ALSO WORTH KNOWING

LSD considerations

LSD isn't a plant medicine, but many people use it or ask about it, so it belongs in an honest safety conversation. This page is educational; I don't source or guide LSD use. Everything on pages 3 through 5 applies to LSD too. These are the points that matter most, or that differ:

CONSIDERATION	LSD	WHAT TO KNOW
Lithium	Avoid	Many of the reported seizures with this combination involved LSD
Tramadol or MAOIs	Avoid	Same seizure and serotonin concerns as with psilocybin
SSRIs / SNRIs	Discuss	Often blunt effects; never taper without your prescriber
History of lingering visual changes (HPPD)	Avoid	Persistent visual effects are uncommon but more often linked to LSD
Heart valve disease, or frequent long-term use	Caution	LSD strongly activates 5-HT2B receptors, the basis of the theoretical valve concern
Heart conditions or high blood pressure	Caution	Can raise heart rate and BP; more stimulating for some people
Bipolar spectrum, insomnia, or sleep-sensitive mood	Caution	Its long duration can disrupt sleep, and lost sleep can destabilize mood
Pregnancy, breastfeeding, or under 21	Avoid	Not enough safety data; developing brain

Substitution risk

Other compounds, including NBOMes, are sold as LSD and have caused deaths. Reagent testing every batch is essential, and a bitter or numbing taste is a warning sign.

Legal status

LSD is not included in Colorado's Natural Medicine Health Act and remains illegal under state and federal law.



READINESS

Real life matters too

Drug testing & work

Some workplaces test for psilocybin. Know your policy.

Hormonal transitions

Postpartum, perimenopause, and cycle shifts can change sensitivity.

Your support system

Who can you call if a day feels hard?

Driving & safety-sensitive work

Don't drive until you know how a dose affects you.

Big life changes

Grief, a new diagnosis, or upheaval may call for more support.

Your why

Clear intentions make for a steadier practice.

cosistersinpsychedelics.org

Online and in person supports & resources

spiritpharmacist.com

Ben Malcolm, psychedelic pharmacist

Fireside Project

Peer support line: call or text 62-FIRESIDE

988 Lifeline

Call or text 988 for crisis support in the U.S.

Not sure where you land?

That's exactly what a consult is for. We'll look at your history and medications together and find a path that's safe for you.

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This guide is for educational and harm-reduction purposes only and is not medical advice. It does not encourage illegal activity. Always consult a qualified healthcare provider about your specific situation.

