

# Psilocybin Microdosing Guide

## **1. *What is microdosing?***

Microdosing refers to the practice of taking a miniscule amount of a psychedelic substance -- usually one-20th to one-tenth of a full dose. This guide will focus on microdosing with psilocybin mushrooms, but you may find parts of the text applicable to microdosing with other types of substances such as LSD, ketamine, iboga, mescaline, and cannabis.

Microdosing can help you get in touch with your Inner Healing Intelligence, which knows exactly what's necessary for your health and happiness. The psychedelic substance can be a reliable and powerful ally to remind you of your innate capacity to heal yourself. Some people may refer to a microdose as a "spiritual vitamin."

People microdose for a variety of reasons. Common intentions include spiritual growth, alleviating anxiety or depression, and entering flow states. Microdosing is most effective as part of a holistic, healthy lifestyle that prioritizes service, community, and truth.

## **2. *What are the advantages of microdosing over macrodosing?***

Taking a full dose of psilocybin mushrooms or truffles may be an ideal option if you have proper integration support and can afford to take at least one or two days away from your normal routine. On the other hand, microdosing can be a gentle method to enhance your life without disruption to your daily activities.

There are several reasons why you may choose to microdose instead of macrodose. Compared to taking a full dose, microdosing:

- usually requires less integration support, as the effects are more subtle and less jarring;
- requires less intensive preparation (although you will find that incorporating various preparation and integration practices into your life is a vital part of the healing and growth process);
- allows you to metaphorically dip your toes in the water before making a full commitment to dive in;
- allows you to retain some control instead of having to let go completely

- gives you the ability to carry on your daily activities in a normal or even enhanced manner;
- causes no hallucinatory, visual effects;
- is more flexible as you can take a microdose anytime during the day. Some people like to take it first thing in the morning, while others like to take it in the afternoon or even right before they go to sleep (although some may find taking the last option may keep them up for longer than expected);
- allows you to adjust dosage more effortlessly on dosing day
- gives you the opportunity to more easily experiment with and track dosages from day to day and week to week.

### **3. *What are the effects of microdosing?***

Technically, a microdose is sub-perceptual, which means the effects are unnoticeable. In reality, however, many people can and want to feel the impacts of a microdose. Some of the most commonly reported effects of microdosing are:

- Increased energy
- A sense of presence and groundedness
- Heightened sense of emotional, mental, and physical well-being
- Increased emotional and mental maturity
- Increased optimism
- A sense of openness, brightness, or lightness
- Heightened sensory perception
- Decreased anxiety, stress and/or depression
- Improvement in relationships and social behaviors
- Decreased negative self-talk
- Increased sense of empathy, compassion, and love
- A heightened sense of being in touch and in tune with the body
- A feeling of interconnectedness
- An expanded sense of self
- Increased creativity
- Decreased need for caffeine, alcohol, tobacco or other stimulants or depressants
- Decreased addictive or destructive tendencies
- Improved eating and sleeping habits
- More clarity and less mental fog
- Less intense headaches
- Improved memory and vocabulary

Janet Chang, a mental health advocate who tracked her results during a [one-year microdosing experiment](#), remarks: *“Over the year I microdosed, I became a more empathetic, compassionate, and affectionate person. I began to live with more acceptance, gratitude, and presence of mind. My workaholic lifestyle turned into one of spontaneity, creativity, self-expression, and lightheartedness. I continued to live out my values, feeling even more connected than before.”*

One redditor writes: *“I’m on day 6 now of microdosing ~0.08 to 0.12g.*

*The difference is subtle yet profound.*

*Nothing in my life has changed, yet everything has. The empty void that sucks the life out of everything I do is still there, but somehow I can see how beautiful it is and it doesn’t impede what I do. I feel how that vacuum is actually part of my ability to connect deeply with others and the world, that it’s one side of the coin, and the other side is God. These are all things I ‘knew’ consciously through mindfulness but couldn’t feel in my being. Now it’s being embodied.*

*I am more present, I don’t overthink, I am in my body. I can simply be without worrying about everything. I feel inspired to do more with my life for the betterment of the world. I am interconnected.*

*All of this happens at such a subtle, unconscious level. So even though my day-to-day hasn’t changed, I feel like I am the person I’m meant to be, when the gunk is cleared away.”*

Another journeyer says: *“I’ve been MD for about 3 months and I have never felt better. I have diagnosed depression and anxiety and was prescribed lexapro but after reading about how hard it is to get off antidepressants I opted to try MD.*

*My energy levels are back to normal, I used to want to sleep all the time and never wanted to go out. I’ve been a lot more productive at work and home, I’ve even had enough energy to go back to the gym. It’s such a mood booster too, I am always a bit chattier on the days I MD (I MD 0.2g about 2-3 days a week).”*

Many microdosers claim the practice allows them to more easily enter flow states and “be in the zone.” Mihaly Csikszentmihályi, the originator of the idea of flow, [describes it](#) as “being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the

previous one, like playing jazz. Your whole being is involved, and you're using your skills to the utmost." Microdosing seems to be a perfect tool for some people who wish to experience a determined, focused mindset free from distractions and negative thoughts.

Microdosing may open you up to more cyclical, instead of linear, thinking. You may find yourself being more curious and less dogmatic. You may find yourself listening more and talking less. You may start to question your assumptions and all the things you thought you knew.

#### **4. What is the ideal microdosing dosage?**

Everybody reacts differently to various doses; some people consider .3 grams (or more) of dried mushrooms a microdose, whereas others are more comfortable with a much smaller dose in the range of .05 - .08 grams. The species or strain of mushrooms you consume also affects dosage, as some are stronger than others. For example, the *azurescens* species or the penis envy strain of the *cubensis* species are noted for being much stronger than the average *cubensis* strain.

It may take a few trials to find your ideal dose. You may find it beneficial to maintain a journal or log during the first few weeks of your microdosing journey, so you can reflect on the tracked results and make adjustments as needed. When in doubt, it's usually better to start small and work your way up.

During your exploration phase, it may be helpful to take your doses in a space where you feel completely comfortable, safe, and free. Until you have a clear understanding on how psilocybin affects you, it may be safer to prepare just as if you were taking a larger dose just in case the effects are stronger than you imagined. Although having an ideal setting is not as crucial for a microdose as for a full dose, you may find it beneficial to avoid certain uncontrolled situations that may make you feel vulnerable (work, social, public transportation, etc.) when you first start experimenting. Definitely do not drive or operate heavy machinery when you are microdosing.

#### **5. How should I take a microdose?**

There are many ways to take a microdose. Everybody has a different preference. There are no rights and wrongs.

Most people like to grind dried mushrooms into a fine powder, and then either encapsulate the powder (with or without other healthy ingredients) or mix it into a smoothie or other liquid.

Some eat mushrooms raw, while others chew them dried. Tea, chocolates, gummies, and tinctures are other delivery methods.

## **6. *Is there an ideal dosing protocol?***

There are various microdosing protocols and schedules. To find one that works best for you, be open to experimenting and listening to your body and intuition. There's no need to rigidly follow a protocol just because it's popular or promoted by someone famous.

Here are the most common ones:

- A “one day on, two days off” schedule is recommended by James Fadiman, the author of [\*The Psychedelic Explorer's Guide: Safe, Therapeutic, and Sacred Journeys\*](#). In this protocol, you take a dose on Day 1, skip a dose on Day 2 and Day 3, and then resume dosing on Day 4. The idea behind this schedule is that the positive effects of microdosing seem to last two days, and the days off allow any residual tolerance to subside. Although Fadiman may have designed this protocol specifically for microdosing LSD, many psilocybin microdosers also follow it.
- A “four days on, three days off” schedule is recommended by Paul Stamets, a distinguished mycologist, who previously suggested a “five days on, two days off” schedule. It may be worth noting that Stamets, now in his mid-60s, who has spent much of his adult life studying psilocybin, has just recently changed his recommended protocol. This should give you confidence to have a flexible approach and allow your own experimentation and results to guide you.
- Other proponents may suggest a “every other day” or an “on, off, on, off, on, off, off” protocol, or a “go with the flow” or “as needed” philosophy.

Microdosing every day is not suggested. The off-days reduce the effects of tolerance that can build up over time, and give you the opportunity to practice working with and processing emotions without the direct aid of a substance. The idea is to become aware of the root causes of unhappiness and pain, and to live a wholesome

lifestyle that avoids these causes, and not to become dependent on any substance. In fact, under certain conditions, you may decide to take an “off-week” or “off-month.”

Some people recommend “stacking” other ingredients with the psilocybin. Stamets suggests adding lion's mane and niacin to the microdose, as they are known to work well with the main ingredient. As [one fan](#) says, “psilocybin mushrooms promotes neuroplasticity and new neural connections, lion's mane promotes the creation of new nerve and brain cells and niacin drives these two medicines to the furthest reaches of the nervous system. Together they work synergistically to create a compound effect that enhances learning, cognition, neuroregeneration and many other things.”

The addition of niacin has its advocates and detractors. Advocates argue that the “flushing” characteristic of niacin provides a built-in control against over- or misuse and opens the blood vessels to allow the other ingredients to move through the body more quickly and fully. Detractors say the possibility of experiencing an uncomfortable “flush,” or feeling unsettled or unwell as a result of the niacin, outweighs the benefits.

To their microdoses, others may add:

- turmeric and black pepper; the black pepper increases the bioavailability of the turmeric, and the turmeric acts as an MAO inhibitor, which makes the mushrooms “stronger”;
- dried ginger root, to reduce potential of nausea;
- medicinal mushrooms such as chaga, cordyceps, and reishi;
- adaptogens such as ashwagandha, bacopa, longjack, griffonia seed;
- vitamins such as d3.

## ***7. Can I simultaneously take antidepressants and microdose?***

This is a common and complex question, and there seems to be no definitive answers or formal studies conducted. To stay safe, please consult your doctor before starting any microdosing regimen, especially if you have a history of mental illness or medication use. [Here is an excellent article](#) that gives an overview of psilocybin's interaction with various medications.

Some people feel that microdosing helps to wean and/or stay off antidepressants. Some report that antidepressant medications dull or even nullify the effects of microdosing. If you do decide to microdose while on these medications, you will most likely need a higher dose to feel desired effects.

Some find that microdosing psilocybin is a healthier, more natural alternative to taking various pharmaceutical agents. Microdosing may be worth a try before committing to a pharmaceutical regimen.

Please note that microdosing does not guarantee happiness. Some people find it extremely difficult to come or stay off certain pharmaceutical medications. Those who have relied on these medications for years may find many painful or difficult repressed emotions coming to the surface, and may feel an urge to return to the numbing effects of the medications. The process of coming off these medications, if that is what you wish to do, may be an uncomfortable ordeal lasting several months.

#### ***8. Does diet affect my reaction to the mushrooms?***

Taking a microdose on an empty stomach will lead to faster metabolization and more intense effects. Taking a dose right after a heavy meal will slow down or weaken your body's reaction as the mushroom competes with other substances to be digested and assimilated into the system. The emptier your stomach and healthier your diet, the less of a dose you will need to achieve the desired effects.

#### ***9. Are there any adverse effects of microdosing?***

When microdosing, some people may experience what they perceive to be adverse side effects. Psilocybin can act as a truth serum that reveals your innermost thoughts, and some of these thoughts may be painful or otherwise unpleasant to encounter. You may feel like running away, hiding or distracting yourself when these thoughts appear. You may feel the urge to blame the medicine for unwanted emotions, but one of microdosing's major lessons is to take responsibility for your responses to what shows up. You can choose to resist reality or relinquish control and surrender. The latter choice leads to freedom and joy.

Some report that microdosing makes them feel tired or drowsy. Some complain of headaches or nausea. These are some of the body's natural responses to energetic and emotional shifts.

For some, microdosing may amplify their anxiety, instead of decreasing it. The medicine makes you sensitive to your emotions and the energies around you. Psilocybin can shake up your sense of self, and make you feel vulnerable. Sometimes while microdosing, you may experience more fear, a natural response to the unknown.

The more you face and overcome this fear, the more confident and grounded you will be. Fear is a natural part of expanding your comfort zone.

You may lose productivity and a certain type of linear focus while taking a microdose. The medicine seems to weaken the analytical part of the mind and activate the feeling part. This shift may affect one's ability to focus on a screen, a conversation, words, or numbers. Microdosing may cause you to feel spaced out and confused for a period of time. You may feel like you are losing control. These experiences can give the thinking mind a rest and show you the causes of stress or anxiety.

Microdosing may change your idea of what medicine is and what the healing process looks and feels like. There are bound to be moments of unpleasantness as the "gunk" comes to the surface. The less spiritual or contemplative work one has done, the more difficult it may feel to face these unpleasant emotions.

It takes time to build a relationship with the medicine, which is alive and organic. Microdosing is not like taking certain pharmaceutical medications; instead of numbing emotions and allowing you to coast and ignore the root causes of your unhappiness, mushrooms require you to become aware of and actively change the causes of your states of mind.

Patience along with a commitment to long-term thinking, healthy living, and reevaluating relationships are necessary factors for the medicine to work its magic. Some people see desired results right away, whereas others start recognizing significant results only after reflecting upon several months of microdosing.

The higher your expectations, the more likely you will be disappointed in the results of microdosing. The medicine merely reflects your relationship with the world. If you expect something outside of yourself to bring you instant or eternal happiness, you will be disillusioned. This disillusionment is part of the spiritual path. Sometimes, one must learn repeatedly that all phenomena is temporary, no matter how pleasant or unpleasant. Holding onto ideas, philosophies, or desires that do not align with the truth only prolongs one's never-ending search for something better and more pleasant and less painful. When you let go of expectations, the world opens up and becomes more wonderful.

### ***10. What happens if I accidentally take too much?***



If you do accidentally take too much, it can help to move the body, eat something, get out into nature, or just lay down and rest until you feel ready to return to your normal routine. Remind yourself that the journey will end and the medicine is showing you whatever you need to see.

### ***11. What about legality?***

The legal status of psilocybin remains a challenge for many. In most jurisdictions (with exceptions in the Netherlands, Jamaica, Brazil, and a few other places), the possession, cultivation and processing of psilocybin (as well as other psychedelics) are criminalized.

However, movements calling for the decriminalization of psilocybin and other substances are gaining steam. Denver has decriminalized psilocybin, while Oakland and Santa Cruz have decriminalized all entheogens. Oregon state and Washington D.C. have psychedelic initiatives appearing on the November ballot. Canada's government has tolerated the sale of psilocybin mushrooms through the internet and in-person dispensaries, and there are widespread calls across the nation to decriminalize simple possession of controlled substances.

With the growing number of positive testimonials about microdosing, many are taking matters into their own hands and finding ways to access the medicine. If you do enough research and read [documents like this](#), you may discover a safe way to find mushrooms.

### ***12. What if I want to take a higher dose?***

Microdosing is a gradual process of unraveling and loosening the tensions in the body and mind, while taking higher doses will bring emotions to the surface in a much more intense and accelerated fashion. Once you start seeing the benefits of microdosing, you may naturally want to explore taking a higher dose. You may even find yourself skipping the microdoses altogether and going straight to bigger doses. Again, there is no right and wrong way to approach the medicine.

There are many written guides online that help you prepare for a higher dose. [Here is one example](#). It's important to note that taking a higher dose will require more stringent preparation and integration protocols to ensure a safe and healing journey. Set and setting become increasingly important as the dosage becomes larger. You may

want to consider a guide or companion to accompany you during your higher dose journey.

Psychedelic retreats are a wonderful opportunity to experience a cohesive, supportive group setting with passionate, skilled professionals (also referred to as guides, therapists, tripsitters, or spaceholders). Here are two links ([one](#), [two](#)) that list psilocybin retreats and guides. While most retreats are focused on providing high-dose psychedelic journeys, there are organizations such as [Rise Wellness](#) that focus exclusively on the microdosing experiences.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[The Third Wave](#) -- information and resources on microdosing

[How One Year of Microdosing Helped My Career, Relationships, and Happiness](#) -- *Medium* article by Janet Chang outlining her learnings after one year of microdosing

[Microdosing's Guide and Explainer](#) -- *The Cut* article that surveys microdosing

[Psychedelic Explorer's Guide](#) -- James Fadiman's book

['Microdosing' is touted by 'shroomers and Reddit users. Science is starting to test their claims — and finding some truth](#) -- *Stat* article highlighting microdosing study conducted by Leiden University in the Netherlands that shows that microdosing may increase creativity

[Self-Rated Effectiveness of Microdosing With Psychedelics for Mental and Physical Health Problems Among Microdosers](#) -- study conducted by Maastricht University in the Netherlands concluding that microdosing may be more effective than conventionally offered treatment options

[What You Should Know about Microdosing for Anxiety](#) -- *Double Blind* article surveying the idea of microdosing various substances to alleviate anxiety

[The Paul Stamets Microdosing Stacking Protocol/Qi Gong Combined Practise Experiment](#) -- *Medium* article by Nick Sun discussing his experience microdosing with the combination of psilocybin/lion's mane/niacin

[Go With The Flow](#) -- *Wired* interview with Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi about flow states

[/r/microdosing](#) -- subreddit dedicated to microdosing

[Can You Take Shrooms on Antidepressants?](#) -- *Synthesis* article on psilocybin's interactions with various medications

[Rise Wellness Retreat](#) -- Jamaican retreat focused on microdosing psilocybin

[Psychedelic Experience](#) -- mushroom retreat and guide listings

[Tripsitters](#) -- mushroom retreat and guide listings

[How to Prepare for Your Psilocybin Journey](#) -- Basic Preparation Guidelines

[Where Can I Get Psilocybin?](#) -- article detailing ways to access the medicine

[Paul Stamets Microdosing Video](#) -- Clip from Stamets' interview with Joe Rogan in which he discusses his recommended stack.