

The Truth About Marijuana

Get The Facts...



Marijuana Affects Your Brain.

THC (the active ingredient in marijuana) affects the nerve cells in the part of the brain where memories are formed. Marijuana can cause attention, memory and learning problems.



Marijuana Affects Your Self-Control.

Marijuana can seriously impair your sense of time and your coordination, impacting things like driving.



Marijuana Can Be Addictive!

Not everyone who uses marijuana becomes addicted, but some users do develop signs of dependence.



Marijuana Can Lead You To Make Poor Decisions.

Marijuana might make you more likely to engage in risky physical activities, such as driving under the influence or engaging in unsafe sexual behaviors that puts you at risk for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.



Marijuana Affects Your Lungs.

Contrary to popular belief, marijuana is not a "natural" drug; there are actually more than 400 known chemicals in marijuana. A single joint contains four times as much cancer-causing tar as a filtered cigarette. Regular smokers cough more and get more colds, bronchitis and other infections.



Marijuana Affects Other Aspects of Your Health.

Marijuana can limit your body's ability to fight off infection. Long-term marijuana use can cause or worsen depression, anxiety and other illnesses.



Marijuana is Not Always What it Seems.

Marijuana can be laced with other dangerous drugs without your knowledge. "Blunts"--hollowed-out cigars filled with marijuana- sometimes have substances such as crack cocaine, PCP, or embalming fluid added.



Use of Marijuana-- Even Medical Marijuana-- is Illegal in NY State.

You can be fined and even arrested for using marijuana. Marijuana may show up on a drug test days or even weeks after you used.



Mental and Physical Effects of Heavy Marijuana Use:

- The development of a strong urge to use that is hard to resist.
- Preoccupation with marijuana, such as thinking about obtaining and using marijuana.
- Difficulty in cutting down on use or quitting, even when negative consequences result from use (such as problems with school, work, relationships, or even financial and legal problems).
- Loss of energy and physical and mental motivation.
- Trouble keeping track of time and impaired short-term memory. Users might forget what happens when they use, have trouble paying attention, staying focused or learning new information.
- Difficulty engaging in tasks requiring focus and concentration, such as driving, reading, and writing.
- Paranoia and hallucinations.
- Decreased ability to fight off physical illnesses.
- Medical problems may develop like lung cancer. Mental health problems like depression and anxiety can develop or worsen.
- Problems performing normal daily activities.
- Undependable and irresponsible behavior. Having a hard time meeting demands and responsibilities (such as going to school or work, getting assignments completed, etc).

If you think that you might have a problem with Marijuana or another drug, contact CWC at (212)774-0700 to schedule an appointment with a counselor.

Additional Resources:

NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene:
nyc.gov/health or call 311

LifeNet (24-hour confidential help for alcohol and other substance abuse problems):
1-800-LIFENET (1-800-543-3638)

National Institute on Drug Abuse:
www.nida.nih.gov/infofacts/marijuana.html or www.marijuana-info.org

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration:
www.oas.samhsa.gov/marijuana.htm

Marijuana Anonymous:
www.ma-newyork.org or call 212-459-4423

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