

# Marijuana *FACTS*

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## Marijuana is NOT Harmless

Marijuana is harmful in many ways and children are most susceptible to its dangerous effects, which include increased risk of anxiety, depression and psychosis. Harmful effects include cognitive impairment, causing problems with concentration and thinking, leading to impaired judgment. Heavy use of marijuana can create short-term problems with attention, memory and learning, and mental health problems by leading to changes in the brain.

Degenhardt, 2009; attcnetwork.org; Bechtold, J. et al, 2015; American Psychiatric Association, 2013; CDC.gov

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## Marijuana is NOT "natural"

There are various forms of marijuana including several synthetic forms of marijuana with unpredictable content. So although it is constantly promoted as "natural", marijuana smoke contains more than 400 chemicals. For example, 80% of marijuana dabs were found to contain pesticide residue from the extraction process.

Atakan, Z. September 2012. Therapeutic Advances in Psychopharmacology, v.2 (6) p. 241-254.

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## Marijuana is as harmful as tobacco

Marijuana and tobacco cigarettes share many of the same toxic chemicals. The amount of tar inhaled and the level of carbon monoxide absorbed by those who smoke marijuana, regardless of THC content, are 3-5 times greater than among those who smoke tobacco. There is 50-70% more cancer-causing material in marijuana smoke than in cigarette smoke.

Also, daily use of small amounts of marijuana (3-4 joints) has a comparable, if not greater effect on the respiratory system than the smoking of more than 20 tobacco cigarettes.

Bechtold, J. et al 2015; American Thoracic Journals; Office of National Drug Control Policy; Family, Adults, and Children First Council; attcnetwork.org; CDC.gov

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## Marijuana is addictive

About 1 in 10 individuals who use marijuana will become addicted. For people who begin using marijuana before the age of 18, that number rises to 1 in 6.

Many studies show marijuana use can lead to dependence, and individuals who use heavily develop withdrawal symptoms such as irritability, anxiety, and difficulty sleeping while trying to quit use. According to the American Psychiatric Association, marijuana use is often associated with behavior that meets the criteria for substance use disorder.

Gorelick DA, Levin KH, Copersino ML, et al. Diagnostic Criteria for Cannabis Withdrawal Syndrome, (2012); National Institute on Drug Abuse