

Marijuana (Cannabis) Information

Definition

- Information on marijuana (cannabis).
- Includes facts, myths, health effects, prevention, and trusted resources.

Health Information

Overview

- Marijuana is the common name for the plant cannabis.
- Weed or pot are other names for marijuana.
- It's the most common recreational drug used besides alcohol. About a third of high school students have tried it.
- THC is the ingredient in marijuana that causes its effects.

Forms of Marijuana

- Marijuana is available in many forms.
- Dried flower (or "bud") is used most often. The flower is smoked in a "joint," "blunt," bong, or pipe.
- "Dabs" are marijuana extracts with a lot of THC. They're also called "budders," "waxes," or "shatters." They're vaped or smoked. They have much higher amounts of THC than the flower.
- "Edibles" are foods mixed with THC. Examples are baked goods (cookies, brownies) or candies (gummies, lollipops).

Symptoms

- After using marijuana, people feel "high." They can feel happy, sleepy, hungry, forgetful, or restless.
- Some people can feel anxious, paranoid, or delusional. Some people can hallucinate.
- Some people can have a fast heart rate, big pupils, or a dry mouth.
- Young children who accidentally ingest cannabis can become very sleepy. Sometimes, children can get so sleepy they go into a coma and stop breathing.

Care Advice

1. Key Points

- Marijuana is a very common recreational drug.
- It comes in many different forms. All have risks.
- It is important to understand marijuana's risks and health effects.

2. Health Risks

- Using marijuana when you are young can harm brain development. The brain keeps developing into your mid 20s. Frequent marijuana use can lower IQ.
- Teens who use marijuana can have problems with behavior, concentration and memory. They're less likely to graduate from high school.
- Using marijuana can make anxiety or depression worse. It can trigger psychosis or suicidal thoughts.
- Just like tobacco, smoking or vaping marijuana causes breathing problems.
- If young children accidentally eat marijuana, they can stop breathing.
- Just like with alcohol, it's dangerous to drive after using marijuana. Reason: marijuana affects your reaction speed, driving judgment and coordination.

3. **Myths About Marijuana**

- **"Marijuana isn't addictive."** Marijuana is addictive. It's more addictive the more you use it, or the earlier you start.
- **"Marijuana is natural."** Even though it's from a plant, marijuana can still be harmful. Many plants, like marijuana, are harmful to humans.
- **"Marijuana is safe during pregnancy."** Marijuana can hurt the baby during pregnancy. The baby can have problems with development and behavior.
- **"Using marijuana makes driving safer."** Marijuana affects your judgment, reaction time, and coordination. This makes driving after using it dangerous.
- **"Secondhand marijuana smoke is safe."** Just like tobacco smoke, cannabis smoke hurts the lungs.
- **"Marijuana can improve your mood."** Marijuana can make depression and anxiety worse. It can lead to psychosis and suicidal thoughts.
- **"Marijuana is safe for teenagers."** Using cannabis at a young age, especially if used often, harms the brain.

4. **Accidental Marijuana Ingestion: Prevention**

- Treat marijuana in the home like alcohol or medicine.
- Keep marijuana locked up, out of sight, and out of reach of children.
- Keep marijuana in the original containers. Usually, these are child resistant.
- Don't use your marijuana around children, especially in the same room or car. Reason: the smoke isn't good for their health. They may also think it's safe for them to use.
- Don't use marijuana when you're taking care of children. Reason: it will make it harder to pay attention and keep them safe.

5. **Marijuana and Teens: Prevention**

- Talk to your teen about marijuana. Start discussions before age 14.
- Set clear rules and expectations about marijuana use. Avoid lecturing or anger.
- Share the risks of using marijuana. Remind them it can keep them from doing their best in school and sports. Share how it is dangerous to drive after using it.
- Support your teen in making good choices. Let them know it's fine to say no or walk away.
- Talk about ways they can resist peer pressure. Brainstorm or role play with them. Help them find the right words to say no.
- Help them stay away from people and places with marijuana. Tell them you will always give them a ride home.
- Listen to your teen's questions about marijuana. If you can't answer them, use one of the resources below.

6. **Trusted Substance Use Resources**

- **National Substance Abuse Hotline.** 1-800-662-4357.
- **The Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse.** Provides a list of addiction treatment helplines. <https://www.ccsa.ca/treatment-support-and-recovery>.
- **National Poison Center.** 800-222-1222.

Call Your Doctor If

- You are concerned about your teen's marijuana use
- You are concerned about your own marijuana use
- You think your child needs to be seen
- You have other questions or concerns

Pediatric Care Advice

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