

MARIJUANA

Marijuana comes from the hemp plant *Cannabis Sativa* and it also contains hundreds of chemicals, including delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), which is the drug's main mind-altering ingredient.



IDENTIFICATION

Street Names: Weed, Pot, Boom, Cannabis, Chronic, Dope, Ganja, Grass, Hemp, Herb, Mary Jane, Reefer, Skunk

What's it Look Like? Marijuana can be compact, green buds or dry, shredded green and brown mix of leaves, flowers, seeds and stems.

How's it Used? Marijuana is usually smoked in joints, pipes, bongs, blunts and hookahs. It can also be mixed in food or brewed as a tea.

What's it Do? THC takes just seconds to go to your head and attach itself to your brain's neurotransmitters-which help your brain communicate with the rest of your body. That "high" feeling means that your brain isn't doing its job.

Warning Signs of Abuse

- Dilated pupils
- Bloodshot eyes
- Sleepy appearance
- Reduced motivation
- Overeating
- Smell on clothing, in room, or in car



Facts about Marijuana

- Just having marijuana in your possession is enough to get you arrested.
- Marijuana use can actually shrink parts of your brain including your hippocampus (the part of your brain that controls memory) and your amygdala (the part that helps with emotions and memory).
- Teens who smoke marijuana are more likely to try other drugs.

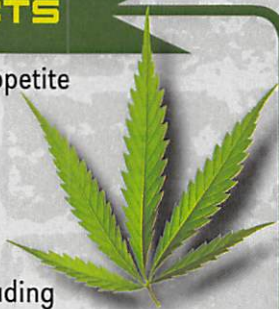
SHORT-TERM EFFECTS

- Increase in appetite
- Inability to concentrate
- Red eyes and dry mouth
- Delusions
- Insomnia
- Loss of consciousness



LONG-TERM EFFECTS

- Weight gain from increased appetite
- Risk of oral cancer
- Weakened immune system
- Depression
- Psychological dependence
- Chest and lung problems, including emphysema, bronchitis and chest colds



Refusal Tips for Kids

It's not always easy for a kid to keep their cool in the face of peer pressure. Give them a few suggestions on how to say "NO" like:

- "No way! I need to keep my concentration on the big game."
- "No thanks. I'm applying to colleges and need to stay straight."
- "Weed makes you fat. No thanks."

Some users claim that marijuana is harmless because it comes from a plant, but it can wreck your mind, your body and your life.



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JUST THE FACTS