

Marijuana

Straight Facts



Guides for Good Living

What about marijuana?

Marijuana is a commonly abused harmful drug. Marijuana comes from a plant. It is green in color and has a sweet, musty smell.

Slang terms for marijuana are:

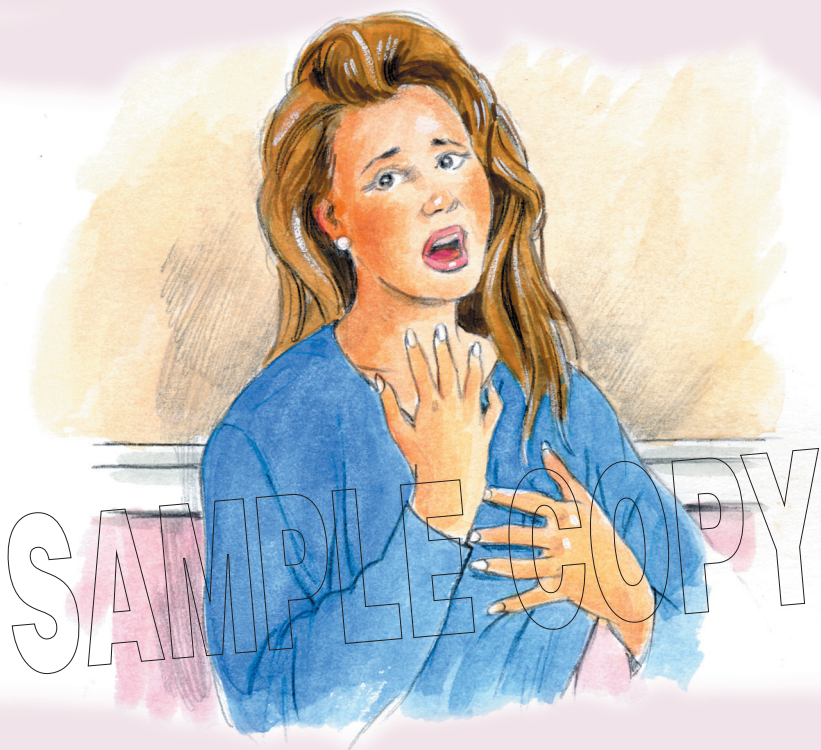
- pot
- mary jane
- grass
- herb
- weed
- bud

Marijuana is usually smoked. Marijuana can also be cooked into foods or made into tea.

Marijuana is illegal. Over 700,000 people are arrested for having or selling marijuana each year.

Marijuana users risk getting heart attacks. People think smoking marijuana will make them feel calm. This may not be true.

The heart starts beating faster when marijuana is smoked. Blood pressure also rises. Users might feel nervous, not relaxed.



Marijuana causes breathing problems.

Smoking marijuana is as bad as smoking tobacco.

Marijuana can cause:

- Daily coughing
- Chest illnesses (like bronchitis)
- Lung infections

Marijuana users also have a higher risk for cancer of the head, neck, and lungs.

Using marijuana leads to accidents.

Smoking marijuana affects how people see and hear. They have trouble walking or doing simple tasks. Users have a high risk of hurting themselves.

Each year, over 80,000 people go to the emergency room because of marijuana use.

Marijuana affects driving ability.

Studies have shown that driving while using marijuana is dangerous. Users may not react as quickly to surprises.

Marijuana users show the same lack of coordination as people who have had too much to drink.

Mixing marijuana and alcohol is even worse. Driving while using any drug puts everyone at risk.

Using marijuana affects memory.

Marijuana users have trouble with their *short-term memory*. Short-term memory is important for learning and performing daily tasks.



Smoking marijuana causes people to lose energy. That is why marijuana smokers are sometimes called “burnouts.” They have burned out their ability to work or play.

Marijuana users often lose interest in doing things they once liked to do. This is called Amotivational Syndrome.

Workers who smoke marijuana are more likely to miss days of work. Students who smoke marijuana get lower grades.

How can you tell if someone has been using marijuana?

Marijuana users may show several signs.

They may:

- Have red, bloodshot eyes
- Have a hard time remembering things that just happened
- Have a strong, sweet smell on their hair and clothes
- Act silly or laugh a lot for no reason
- Stop doing things they used to like doing
- Stop talking with family and friends
- Be sleepy, lazy, or have a careless attitude
- Seem dizzy or have trouble walking



Quitting is hard.

Marijuana users trying to stop may:

- Have trouble sleeping
- Get angry quickly and with little reason
- Feel nervous or anxious
- Want more marijuana

About 220,000 people go to drug-abuse treatment programs to stop using marijuana each year.

Treatment is available for people who want to quit using marijuana. Some places to find treatment programs are:

- Hospitals
- Church groups
- Public health clinics
- Community centers

**Know the facts. Know the risks.
Don't use marijuana.**

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INSIGHT
series

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