

# MARIJUANA

THE LIFE OF A COUCH POTATO  
MARIJUANA ZAPS ENERGY LEVELS

TALK, TALK  
WHAT PEOPLE SAY WHEN THEY  
TALK ABOUT MARIJUANA

18 WAYS MARIJUANA  
HURTS SMOKERS' HEALTH

EXPLORE THE 'NET  
MORE ON MARIJUANA

DEAD  
END

DRUG



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# Explore the Facts

Maybe you have heard people talk about marijuana. It is possible you didn't know what they were talking about. They may have called it one of these names:

pot

grass

Weed

bud

herb

ganja

joint

roll

roach

Maybe you have seen actors using marijuana in the movies. They might show people smoking something and then acting weird. Marijuana is usually smoked in a homemade cigarette called a...

## Fast Fact



# on Marijuana

Other people add it to cigars.  
Then they call it a...

Whatever people call it,  
marijuana is bad news. Using  
it is against the law. It can  
hurt your health or make you  
do crazy things. No way do you  
want to try this stuff.

Marijuana is:

Read the articles  
inside to learn why  
marijuana is not only...

It's also...

blunt  
illegal  
dangerous  
harmful  
dope  
dumb!

Every year almost 100,000 people have to go to the emergency room because they have been using marijuana! Some users had medical problems. Others were injured in marijuana-related accidents.



# Stink Weed

Marijuana comes from a certain kind of plant called cannabis. Users smoke the dried leaves, flowers, stems, and seeds of the plant.

If you ever smell marijuana burning, you will never forget it. It smells sweet and rotten at the same time, like a skunk in a flower shop. The smell of marijuana sticks in users' hair and clothes for a while after they smoke. In fact, some pot smokers get caught because they stink!

Marijuana looks like a clump of dried moss. It is brown, gray, green, or all three colors mixed together.

People often carry marijuana in small plastic bags. A bunch of marijuana smaller than a grape fills a pipe or cigarette.



## The Lights Are On.

They laugh at things that just aren't funny.

They talk and talk, but they don't make any sense.

Who are they? They are people who have been smoking marijuana—pot smokers.

Marijuana messes with users' brains. Some marijuana users were asked how well they could remember things. Over half of the people who had been smoking pot said that they forgot what a conversation was about before it was over!

That's pretty lame, but it's not too surprising. Scientists know that marijuana limits a user's learning. It makes it hard for users to solve problems or to remember things.

## But No One's Home

Now you know why marijuana users seem to be a few candles short of a birthday cake. They're burned out.



# Day By Day

## Short-term Effects of Use

Any marijuana use hurts your body. Here's what using marijuana for only a little while can do to your...



### Brain

- 5 senses weaker
- Difficulty solving problems
- Poor coordination (clumsiness)
- Forgetfulness
- Hard time paying attention
- Learning problems



### Lungs

- Daily cough
- More colds
- Lung infections (like bronchitis)

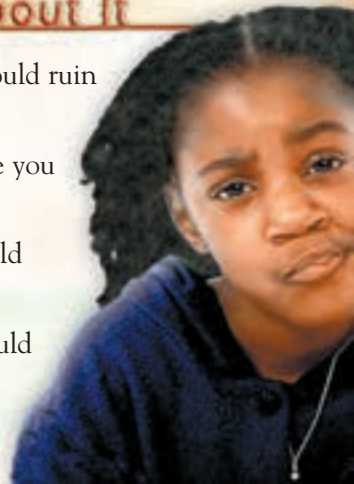


### Heart

- Much faster heart rate  
(That = STRESS!)

### Think About It

1. Name two short-term effects that could ruin your performance in sports.
2. Which short-term effect could make you need a prescription from a doctor?
3. Name one long-term effect that could make it hard to hold a job.
4. Name two long-term effects that could kill a person.



# Over Time

## Long-term Effects of Use

People who use marijuana for a longer time can get hurt even more. Long-term use damages a user's...

### Brain

- Cannot focus attention
- Bad memory



### Lungs

- Higher risk of cancer
- More bronchitis and pneumonia



### Heart

- Higher blood pressure (hurts heart)
- More chance of having heart attacks



### Whole Body

- Not as good at fighting diseases
- Harder to have children



Answers: (1) Lung infections, weak vision, or poor coordination  
(2) Lung infections (3) Cannot focus attention, bad memory  
(4) Cancer, pneumonia, heart attacks

# Is Marijuana Addictive?

## Recognized Signs of Addiction:

- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Tolerance</b>       | “Needing” more to get the same effect                 |
| <b>Withdrawal</b>      | Uncomfortable feelings when use is stopped            |
| <b>Loss of Control</b> | Not being able to limit use when wanting to limit it  |
| <b>Preoccupation</b>   | Thinking mostly about the drug and how to get it      |
| <b>Persistence</b>     | Keeping up use even though it causes bad consequences |

You Be the Judge.

**Story 1:** Gary's friend, Jacob, said he won't hang out with Gary unless Gary quits smoking pot. They've been friends since 1<sup>st</sup> grade. Gary says he wants to stay friends with Jacob, but he keeps smoking marijuana.



Addicted?  Yes  No

Reason:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**Story 2:** Tiffany spent her entire allowance on marijuana this week. That was even more than she spent last week. She told herself she would save a couple of dollars to use for something else, but she couldn't do it.



Addicted?  Yes  No

Reason:

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**Story 3:** José was drawing in math class today. He drew a huge marijuana leaf on his notebook. When the teacher called on him, he didn't know how to answer. He had not been paying attention. The first thing he did after school was count his money to see if he had enough to buy some marijuana.



Addicted?  Yes  No

Reason:

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**Story 4:** Darren used to take a few puffs off of a joint (a marijuana cigarette) and feel "totally high." Now he smokes a whole joint before he feels any different at all.



Addicted?  Yes  No

Reason:

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# Who's High? Here's Hints.

If you think your friends may be using drugs, you are probably pretty worried. If you just ask them, they could lie. Or if it's not true, you could hurt their feelings.

If you want to know if your friend has been smoking marijuana, look out for these signs:

Dizzy Telling dumb jokes

Eating tons  
of junk food

Sleepy

Giggling

Super  
thirsty

Forgets what  
just happened

Thinks  
people are  
after him

Red,  
bloodshot  
eyes

Trouble  
walking

# burned out

Anyone who thinks smoking marijuana is cool has a big surprise coming. It's a common thing to see in pot smokers, and it has the nickname "burnout."

Doctors call it "amotivational syndrome." That's a big name for losing interest in life.

People who get "stoned" on marijuana seem to lose interest in everything that makes life exciting. They forget about any goals they used to have. They are only interested in marijuana.

## Burned out pot smokers ...

Can't pay attention to things. They get distracted easily.

Do the least amount of work to get by in life. Then they spend the rest of their time smoking marijuana.

Many times, they start feeling sad and hopeless about their lives, but they keep using marijuana!

marijuana is a dead-end

# TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

You know that using marijuana is a rotten idea. What else have you learned? Use the word bank at the bottom of the page to help you fill in the blanks in the reading.

Marijuana is sometimes called weed or \_\_\_\_\_ . Marijuana is the leaves and other parts of the \_\_\_\_\_ plant. Marijuana is an \_\_\_\_\_ drug.



Most marijuana users smoke the drug. They may make their own cigarette (usually called a \_\_\_\_\_ ), or use a pipe.



People who are "high" on marijuana may be called \_\_\_\_\_. They often want to eat a lot, and they feel very \_\_\_\_\_. They may trip or \_\_\_\_\_ when they walk.



Marijuana makes thinking difficult. It can ruin someone's \_\_\_\_\_. Many users lose interest in life, which has the nickname \_\_\_\_\_. The more marijuana someone smokes, the more it takes to feel the effects. This is called \_\_\_\_\_.



## word bank

BURNOUT      ILLEGAL      MEMORY      STUMBLE  
CANNABIS      TOLERANCE  
JOINT      STONED      THIRSTY      POT

# MAKE A CONNECTION



## KIDS=HEALTH

Tons of health and safety tips including info on marijuana

<http://kidshealth.org/kid>



## KEEP=IT=REAL

Interactive site with great information on marijuana's effects on the brain.

[www.keep-it-real.us](http://www.keep-it-real.us)



STAYING AWAY FROM



## ABOVE=THE=INFLUENCE

Packed full of information on marijuana and drug abuse. Includes real stories from real kids.

[www.abovetheinfluence.com](http://www.abovetheinfluence.com)



## NIDA=FOR=TEENS

Articles and information on marijuana and other drugs.

<http://teens.drugabuse.gov>





# SAYING NO

*It's easy to be true to yourself if you feel strong on your values. Spend some time thinking about all of the ways marijuana can hurt your health and life.*

Now—get mentally prepared for a time when someone offers you marijuana. If you are ever offered marijuana, you will know exactly what to do.

## Ask yourself the 5 Ws:

**Who** is offering me marijuana? Does this person really care about you and your health?

Think about someone who has offered you marijuana or someone who might do it.

**When** does the person want me to smoke marijuana? All drugs are more dangerous for growing kids than for adults.

Think about ways that smoking marijuana as a kid could be especially bad:

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# BREAK IT DOWN



**Where** might I get offered marijuana? Is this a place you need to be?

Think about places where it would be more likely that someone would offer you marijuana. Write down some ways that you could avoid those places:

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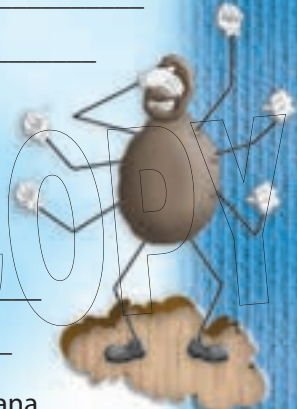
**What** could happen to me if I smoke marijuana?

Marijuana is illegal and it has many safety risks.

Write down some consequences you could face if you smoked marijuana:

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**Why** should I choose not to use marijuana? Marijuana can hurt your health and your mind.

Write down some of the reasons that smoking marijuana is a dead-end decision:

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**Finally...**

Look at your answers to the 5 Ws. Use them to help you think of three ways to say NO to marijuana:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_





# Fast Fact

Marijuana can hurt your ability to learn and remember. Some marijuana smokers were asked if smoking marijuana made it hard for them to remember what they read. Almost half said "yes!"

***Smoking marijuana could wreck your grades!***

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