

# MARIJUANA

the life of a  
pot smoker

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**10 Facts You Need  
About Marijuana**

**Profile of a Brain Snatcher**

**Marijuana Health Alert  
Short- and Long-term Effects**

**It's Good to Be Needed  
A Story About Friends**

# MARIJUANA

## serious trouble

Some people think that using marijuana is no big deal.

If you think ...

... damaging your memory ...

... losing interest in life ...

... harming your health ...

... breaking the law ...

... is a big deal ...

...then you would definitely agree that using marijuana is a really big deal. It can cause all of those problems and more.

**Why do people choose to use marijuana?**

We can't answer for every bad choice people make, but some users smoke pot to try to impress their friends.

**What's up with that?**

If you need to break the law and endanger your health to keep friends, stop and think: What kind of friends are they anyway?

Read on to learn more about marijuana and the many, many reasons to stay away from it.



# 10 MARIJUANA BASICS

1 Marijuana comes from the plant *Cannabis sativa*.

2 The leaves, stems, flowers, and seeds of marijuana are usually dried, then smoked.

3 Marijuana has dozens of street names, including “pot,” “weed,” “herb,” and “bud.”

4 Some people smoke marijuana in a homemade cigarette called a “joint” or a “nail.” Other users add marijuana to a cigar and call it a “blunt.”

5 Some people smoke marijuana from small pipes. Others use large water pipes called “bongs.”

6 The main chemical in marijuana that changes how the brain works is delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC for short).

7 Marijuana contains over 400 other chemicals in addition to THC.

8 New users might feel effects from a few puffs of marijuana.

9 After a while, people use more marijuana to feel the same effects. That’s called “tolerance.”

10 Marijuana is an illegal drug.

# BREATH

Marijuana is not harmless fun. Just like any drug, marijuana has negative effects on your body.

Marijuana can hurt your health after only a few uses. It can cause:

- Problems with memory and learning
- Changes in the senses of sight, hearing, and touch
- Lost sense of time passing
- Difficulty thinking and solving problems
- Poor coordination—could cause accidents
- Faster heart rate
- Feelings of stress or of being in danger
- Daily cough
- More colds than usual
- Higher rate of lung infections, like bronchitis

## Fast Fact

*“Everyone” is not doing it. According to a recent study, four out of five 12- to 17-year-olds do not smoke marijuana.*

Short-term Effects





# HLESS

Long-term effects

Doctors still don't know all of the effects of using marijuana for a long time. Some of the long-term effects that they do know are:

- More bronchitis and pneumonia
- Increased risk of lung cancer
- Greater chance of heart attacks
- Decreased ability to fight diseases
- Possible problems with having babies (for both males and females)
- Damage to memory—possibly permanent

16 Ways Pot Smoking Damages Lungs and Other Parts of the Body



# VOXAZ DACO

Heavy, ongoing marijuana use can send users right into the black hole called **amotivational syndrome**.

The gravitational pull of a black hole in outer space sucks everything into it. **Amotivational syndrome** sucks in pot smokers in the same way.

Many people who smoke pot lose interest in going after their goals. They give up their hobbies and sports. They stop caring about their looks. They focus mostly on getting and smoking more marijuana.

Pot smokers may be called "burnouts." That's **amotivational syndrome**. It burns up users' ability to pay attention and robs them of their energy. Smoking marijuana consumes someone's interest in life just like a black hole consumes everything around it.

Unlike a black hole, **amotivational syndrome** can be avoided. Skip the marijuana, and you'll escape burnout.



# MARIJUANA e-NCYCLOPEDIA

Check out these online information sources to learn more about marijuana, other drugs, and your good health.

## KEEP IT REAL

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

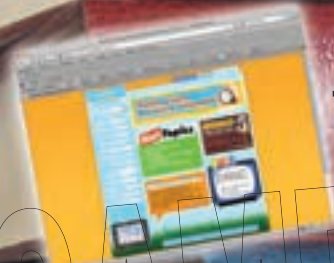
<http://www.keep-it-real.us>



## TEENSHEALTH

Tons of health and safety tips, including marijuana info

<http://teenshealth.org>



## ABOVE THE INFLUENCE

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

<http://www.abovetheinfluence.com>



## NIDA FOR TEENS

Articles and information on marijuana and other drugs.

<http://teens.drugabuse.gov>





# What the D

Some people who smoke marijuana will try to tell you that it is not addictive. They say they can “quit anytime.” Doctors disagree about marijuana being addictive.



### Sign 1:

**Tolerance.** A drug addict takes more and more of the drug to feel the same old effects.

### Evidence:

People who smoke marijuana smoke much more over time to feel the same “high” they used to feel.

### Sign 2:

**Withdrawal.** Someone who is addicted to a drug has uncomfortable physical or emotional feelings when they stop using it.

### Evidence:

Some pot smokers become cranky and nervous when they quit smoking it.



### Sign 3:

**Loss of control.** Someone who is addicted to a drug wants to limit their use, but they can't.

### Evidence:

Many pot smokers spend more money on drugs than they planned. They take risks to get their fix. They smoke “just a little more,” over and over.

Well Doctor? What's your diagnosis? If it looks like marijuana is addictive



# Doctors Say

Psychiatrists are the doctors who usually treat the disease of addiction. They say that if a person shows some of these five signs, the person may be addicted.

## Sign 4:

**Preoccupation.** Addicted people spend most of their time thinking about the drug and how to get it.

## Evidence:

Pot smokers may draw marijuana leaves or wear them on their clothing. They joke about marijuana, talk about it, and try to get their friends to start smoking it.



## Sign 5:

**Persistence.** Addicted people keep using drugs even though bad things happen to their health and in their lives.

## Evidence:

People who smoke marijuana may be uncoordinated and have trouble concentrating, which can cause problems playing sports, with relationships, and in school. Some users continue to smoke pot even after they get in trouble at school, on the job, or with the police.



**Control.** Addicts  
quit their drug  
because they can't.

**Control.**  
Addicts  
quit their drug  
because they can't.

As your  
addiction grows to you like  
a weed, you're not alone.

# GET A CLUE

Did you ever hear the expression, "Curiosity killed the cat"? It can be dangerous to go poking around in the unknown!

Here's some info on marijuana to deal with that nasty curiosity before it gets the better of you:

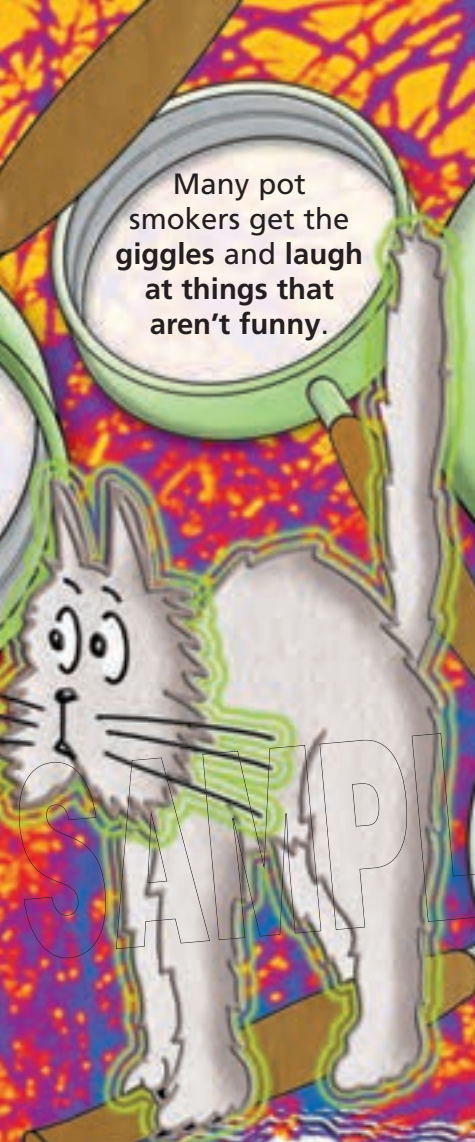
Marijuana has a **strong, musty, sweet smell**. The smell of the **smoke can cling to a user** for quite a while.

Someone who has been smoking marijuana may seem **sleepy and lazy**. They feel **paranoid (nervous and fearful)** – especially of getting caught with drugs. Some of them become **anxious and upset**.


**Red, blood-shot eyes** are common, too.

Marijuana is often carried and sold in small plastic bags. Inside the bag, marijuana looks like **dried, dead grass or weeds**. It is usually **brownish-green or grayish** in color.

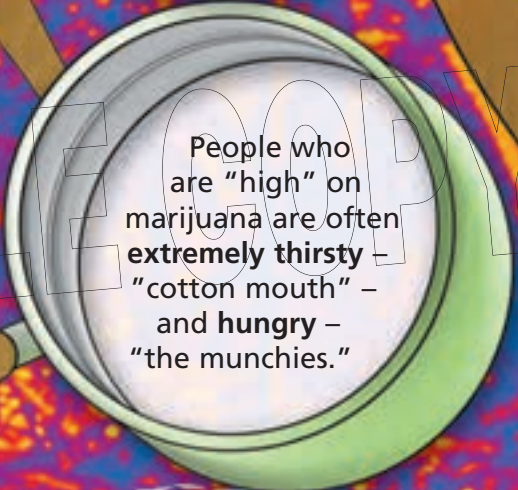




Many pot smokers get the giggles and laugh at things that aren't funny.



Someone who has been smoking marijuana may forget things that just happened. Half of the users studied said that they sometimes forgot what a conversation was about before it was over!



People who are "high" on marijuana are often extremely thirsty – "cotton mouth" – and hungry – "the munchies."

Mystery solved. If you see these clues, you'll know that marijuana is nearby and to keep your distance.



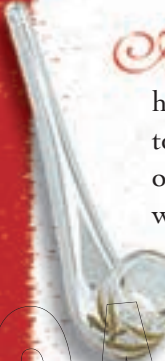
FAST  
FACT

Between 1998 and 2008, the number of people who went to treatment centers for help quitting marijuana increased in all 50 states. In fact, over all admissions for marijuana addiction treatment was up 30% across the country.

# A Little Help

*Sometimes it's easier to get advice from people your own age. Even if their advice is not perfect, it seems like they just understand you better.*

*Get some practice helping your friends stay away from marijuana. When your pal asks for help, you will have your answers ready!*

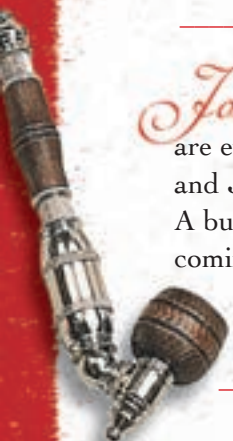


*Andrea* likes this guy named Devon. She's been trying to get him to notice her all year long. Suddenly, he is interested in her too. They hang out after baseball practice one day, and he offers to smoke marijuana with her. She is trying to think of what to say when her mother arrives to drive her home.

Andrea is worried. What should she do next time if Devon offers her marijuana?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



*Joseph* is at a big birthday party for a girl in his class. There are even some kids from another school there. It's getting late and Joseph doesn't know where the birthday girl's parents are. A bunch of kids start passing around a pipe of marijuana. It's coming Joseph's way.

What should Joseph do?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



*Wilson's* brother Robert is in the most popular 10th grade group. When Wilson gets to high school, Robert will be a senior, and his group will rule the school. One afternoon, Robert and his friends start smoking pot in the backyard. They offer some to Wilson. They laugh at him when he says no. Wilson feels embarrassed and trapped. What should he do if the guys smoke marijuana at his house again? What should he say to Robert about smoking pot?

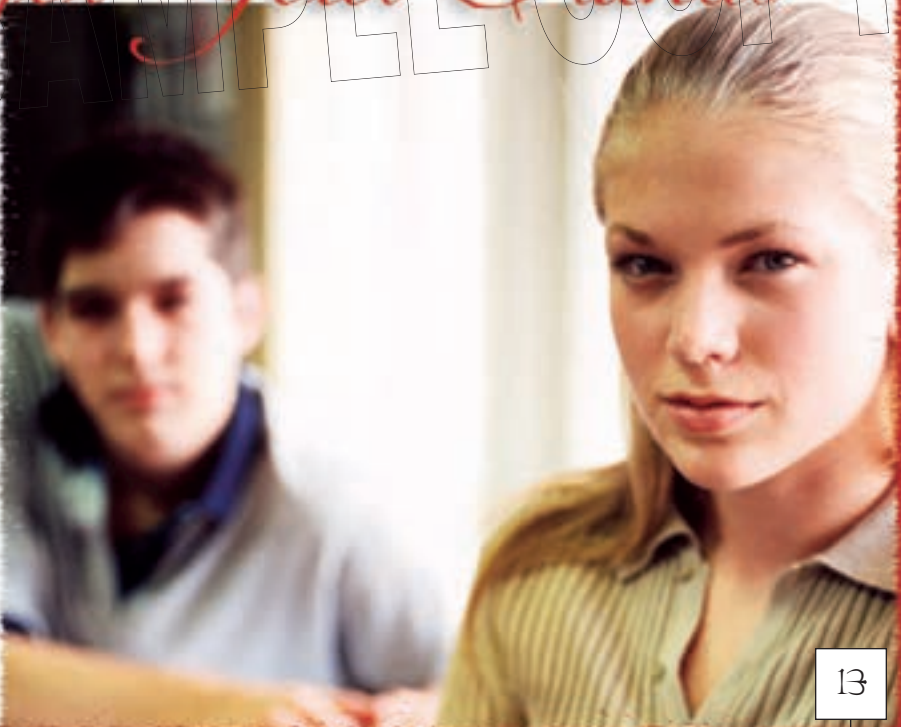


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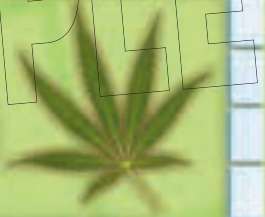
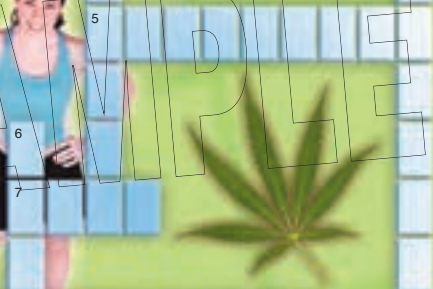
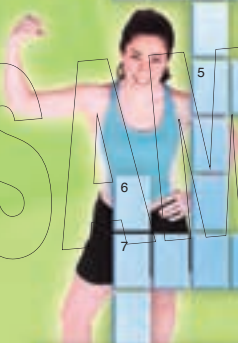
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*for Your Friends*  
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# STRONG LANGUAGE

Flex your memory muscles. Test your marijuana knowledge with this puzzle.



## Across

- Marijuana comes from a plant called \_\_\_\_\_ sativa.
- A marijuana cigarette is often called a \_\_\_\_\_.
- Over time, pot smokers must smoke more and more to feel the same effects. This is called \_\_\_\_\_.
- People who smoke marijuana for a while may have increased risk of cancer of the \_\_\_\_\_.
- Smoking marijuana can lead to daily coughs and lung infections like \_\_\_\_\_.
- Heavy pot smokers tend to lose interest in life and to focus only on marijuana. This is called \_\_\_\_\_ syndrome.

## Down

- When marijuana smokers spend much of their time thinking about marijuana, it's a possible sign of \_\_\_\_\_.
- Marijuana can cause problems with learning and with \_\_\_\_\_.
- A common side effect of smoking marijuana is red or \_\_\_\_\_ eyes.
- The main mind-altering chemical in marijuana is delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol, or \_\_\_\_\_, for short.

Answers: Across (1) CANNABIS; (2) JOINT; (3) TOLERANCE; (4) LUNG; (5) BRONCHITIS; (6) BLOODSHOT; (7) THEC; (8) ADDICTION; (9) MEMORY; (10) AMOTIVATIONAL.



# AND THEN THERE'S THIS...

- Using, carrying, or selling marijuana can get you expelled from school or arrested.

- Young people who use marijuana have 104 times greater risk of eventually using cocaine than those who never try marijuana have.

- Marijuana lowers your inhibitions. That means it makes you likely to do things that you normally would never dream of doing.

- Almost half of pot smokers who were asked said that they could not remember what they had read if they had been smoking marijuana.

- About 80% of teenagers do not use marijuana.

- Someone who smokes 1-3 joints (marijuana cigarettes) per day gets about the same amount of lung damage as someone who smokes 5 times as many tobacco cigarettes! That also means they have 5 times the risk of lung cancer.



# spotting the stoned

*Since you're not using marijuana, you're best off staying away from people who do. They're likely to get you in trouble, and they may try to get you to use. Here's how to spot 'em:*

- **Very hungry and/or thirsty**
- **May forget things that just happened**
- **Laughing at silly things or nothing at all**
- **Uncoordinated, dizzy, or having trouble walking**
- **Sleepy, lazy, or careless attitude**
- **Strong, sweet, smoky smell to hair and clothes**



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