

MARIJUANA

Marijuana is usually rolled up in a cigarette called a joint or a nail. It can also be brewed as a tea or mixed with food, or smoked through a water pipe called a bong.

Cannabis* is number three of the top five substances which account for admissions to drug treatment facilities in the United States, at 16%. According

STREET NAMES:

- Weed
- Blunt
- Grass
- Herb
- Pot
- Reefer
- Smoke
- Mary Jane
- Skunk
- Boom
- Gangster
- Kiff
- Chronic
- Ganja
- Super Skunk
- Purple Haze
- Dope
- Nederweed

to a National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, kids who frequently use marijuana are almost four times more likely to act violently or damage property. They are five times more likely to steal than those who do not use the drug.

Marijuana is often more potent today than it used to be. Growing techniques and selective use of seeds have produced a more powerful drug. As a result, there has been a sharp increase in the number of marijuana-related emergency room visits by young pot smokers.

Because a tolerance builds up, marijuana can lead users to consume stronger drugs to achieve the same high. When the effects start to wear off, the person may turn to

* cannabis: any of the different drugs that come from Indian hemp, including marijuana and hashish.

more potent drugs to rid himself of the unwanted conditions that prompted him to take marijuana in the first place. Marijuana itself does not lead the person to the other drugs: people take drugs to get rid of unwanted situations or feelings. The drug (marijuana) masks the problem for a time (while the user is high). When the "high" fades, the problem, unwanted condition or situation returns more intensely than before. The user may then turn to stronger drugs since marijuana no longer "works."

Short-term Effects:

Loss of coordination and distortions in the sense of time, vision and hearing, sleepiness, reddening of the eyes, increased appetite and relaxed muscles. Heart rate can speed up. In fact, in the first hour of smoking marijuana, a user's risk of a heart attack could increase fivefold. School performance is reduced through impaired memory and lessened ability to solve problems.

Long-term Effects:

Long-term use can cause psychotic symptoms. It can also damage the lungs and the heart, worsen the symptoms of bronchitis and cause coughing and wheezing. It may reduce the body's ability to fight lung infections and illness.

