

"DRUGS DON'T VOBB"

MARIJUANA

Marijuana is a green or gray mixture of dried, shredded flowers and leaves of the hemp plant (*Cannabis sativa*). It is the most often used illegal drug in this country.

Most users roll loose marijuana into a cigarette (called a "joint"). The drug can also be smoked in a water pipe, called a "bong". Some users mix marijuana into foods or use it to brew a tea. Hash users either smoke the drug in a pipe or mix it with tobacco and smoke it as a cigarette.

Lately, young people have a new method of smoking marijuana: they slice open cigars and replace the tobacco with marijuana, making what's called a "blunt." When the blunt is smoked with a 40 oz. bottle of malt liquor, it is called a "B-40."

All forms of cannabis are mind-altering (psychoactive) drugs; they all contain THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol), the main active chemical in marijuana. There are about 400 chemicals in a cannabis plant, but THC is the one that affects the brain the most.

Because marijuana users often inhale the unfiltered smoke deeply and then hold it in their lungs as long as possible, marijuana is damaging to the lungs and pulmonary system. Marijuana smoke contains some of the same carcinogens and toxic particulates as tobacco, sometimes in higher concentrations. Long-term users of cannabis may develop psychological dependence and require more of the drug to get the same effect. The drug can become the center of their lives.

NEGATIVE EFFECTS

- Increased heart rate
- Bloodshot eyes
- Dry mouth and throat
- Impaired or reduced short-term memory
- Impaired or reduced comprehension
- Altered sense of time
- Reduced ability to perform tasks requiring concentration and coordination, such as driving a car
- Altered motivation and cognition, making the acquisition of new information difficult
- Paranoia
- Psychological dependence
- Impairments in learning and memory, perception, and judgement – difficulty speaking, listening effectively, thinking, retaining knowledge, problem solving, and forming concepts
- Intense anxiety or panic attacks

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Georgia Administrative Services, Inc.
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"DRUGS DON'T WORK"

AMPHETAMINES

Amphetamines are stimulants or "uppers" which are usually made synthetically in unsafe illegal labs. The effects – stimulation of the central nervous system; a sense of well-being and high energy; a release of social inhibitions; and feelings of cleverness, competence, and power – are similar to the effects of cocaine but last longer, from 4 to 6 hours depending on dose and potency.

The term "amphetamine" is used to refer to a large class of stimulants: amphetamines (black beauties, white bennies), dextroamphetamines (dexies, beans), and methamphetamines (crank, meth, crystal, speed). The different types of amphetamines have such similar chemical make-ups and effects that even experienced users may not be able to tell which drug they have taken.

Amphetamines can be taken orally, injected, smoked, or snorted. Injecting or smoking leads to an immediate intense sensation – a "rush" – that lasts only a few minutes and is described as extremely pleasurable. Oral or intranasal use produces a milder euphoria, a high, but not a rush. Amphetamines taste extremely bitter, and injection and snorting are painful.

"Ice," a slang term for smokeable methamphetamine with a translucent rock-like appearance, is a highly addictive and toxic form of amphetamine.

Chronic amphetamine use produces a psychosis that resembles schizophrenia and is characterized by paranoia, picking at the skin, and auditory and visual hallucinations. Extremely violent and erratic behavior is frequently seen among chronic abusers of amphetamines.

NEGATIVE EFFECTS

- Irritability
- Anxiety
- Increased blood pressure
- Paranoia
- Depression
- Aggression
- Convulsions
- Dilated pupils and blurred vision
- Dizziness
- Sleeplessness
- Loss of appetite and malnutrition
- Increased body temperature
- Nerve cell damage
- Addiction

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COCAINE/CRACK

Cocaine is a drug extracted from the leaves of the coca plant. It is a potent brain stimulant and one of the most powerfully addictive drugs.

Cocaine is distributed on the street in two main forms: cocaine hydrochloride is a white crystalline powder that can be snorted or dissolved in water and injected; and "crack" is cocaine hydrochloride that has been processed with ammonia or sodium bicarbonate (baking soda) and water into a freebase cocaine. These chips, chunks, or rocks can be smoked.

Cocaine may be used occasionally, daily, or in a variety of compulsive, repeated-use "binges". Regardless of how it is used, cocaine is highly addictive. Crack cocaine and injected cocaine reach the brain quickly and bring an intense and immediate high. Snorted cocaine produces a high more slowly.

Cocaine can produce a surge in energy, a feeling of intense pleasure, and increased confidence. The effects of powder cocaine last about 20 minutes, while the effects of "crack" last about 12 minutes. Heavy use of cocaine may produce hallucinations, paranoia, aggression, insomnia, and depression.

Cocaine's effects are short lived, and once the drug leaves the brain, the user experiences a "coke crash" that includes depression, irritability, and fatigue.

NEGATIVE EFFECTS

- Central nervous system stimulation
- Pupil dilation
- Elevated blood pressure
- Elevated heart rate
- Increased respiratory rate
- Increased body temperature
- Stuffy or runny nose
- Irritation of the mucous membrane of the nose
- AIDS, hepatitis and other diseases caused by injecting cocaine with contaminated equipment
- Insomnia
- Loss of appetite
- Tactile hallucinations
- Paranoia
- Seizures
- Death by cardiac arrest or respiratory failure
- Constricted peripheral blood vessels
- Feelings of restlessness, irritability, and anxiety
- Harm to health and development of infants born to women who use cocaine while pregnant

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ALCOHOL

Alcohol - including beer, wine, and hard liquor - is the most commonly used and widely abused psychoactive drug in the country.

Alcohol is the most widely tried drug among teenagers; over 50% of 8th graders and 8 out of 10 12th graders report having tried alcohol.

Many teenagers report binge drinking - in 1995, 30% of 12th graders surveyed reported binge drinking (5+ drinks in a sitting) in the previous 2 weeks. Even young teens report irresponsible uses of alcohol - 25% of 8th graders have been drunk.

When a person drinks alcohol, the alcohol is absorbed by the stomach, enters the bloodstream, and goes to all the tissues. The effects of alcohol are dependent on a variety of factors, including a person's size, weight, age, and sex, as well as the amount of food and alcohol consumed. The disinhibiting effect of alcohol is one of the main reasons it is used in so many social situations. Other effects of moderate alcohol intake include dizziness and talkativeness; the immediate effects of a larger amount of alcohol include slurred speech, disturbed sleep, nausea, and vomiting. Alcohol, even at low doses, significantly impairs the judgement and coordination required to drive a car safely. Low to moderate doses of alcohol can also increase the incidence of a variety of aggressive acts, including domestic violence and child abuse. Hangovers are another possible effect after large amounts of alcohol are consumed; a hangover consists of feeling headachy, nauseated, thirsty, dizzy, and tired.

Prolonged, heavy use of alcohol can lead to addiction (alcoholism). Sudden cessation of long term, extensive alcohol intake is likely to produce withdrawal symptoms, including severe anxiety, tremors, hallucinations and convulsions. Long-term effects of consuming large quantities of alcohol, especially when combined with poor nutrition can lead to permanent damage to vital organs such as the brain and liver. In addition, mothers who drink alcohol during pregnancy may give birth to infants with fetal alcohol syndrome. These infants may suffer from mental retardation and other irreversible physical abnormalities. In addition, research indicates that children of alcoholic parents are at greater risk than other children of becoming alcoholics.

NEGATIVE EFFECTS

- Dizziness
- Slurred speech
- Disturbed sleep
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Hangovers
- Impaired motor skills
- Violent behavior
- Impaired learning
- Fetal alcohol syndrome
- Respiratory depression and death (high doses)
- Addiction (alcoholism)

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