



DO YOU KNOW THIS ABOUT MARIJUANA?

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Babies born to mothers who use marijuana during pregnancy have eleven times the risk of getting childhood leukemia. (Robinson and Buckley)

Marijuana smoke produces airway injury, acute and chronic bronchitis, lung inflammation, and decreases pulmonary defenses against infection. Smoking one marijuana cigarette leads to airway depositions of four times as much cancer-causing tar as does tobacco smoke. (Tashkin)

Cases of cancer, including cancer of the mouth, tongue, larynx, jaw, head, neck, and lungs have been reported in young marijuana smokers that would not occur in tobacco smokers until much later in life. (Southern Medical Journal)

A 1995 study of blood samples taken from 1,441 dead or impaired drivers across Canada found marijuana present in 38% of these samples. ((Hindmarsh and Jeffery)

Marijuana has long been known to trigger attacks of mental illness, such as bipolar psychosis and schizophrenia. It has been shown that marijuana users are six times more likely to develop schizophrenia than are non-users. (Andreasson)

The use of marijuana leads to the use of other drugs. Of those who use marijuana 3 to 10 times, 20% go on to use cocaine. Of those who use marijuana 100 or more times, 75% go on to use cocaine. (Journal of Clinical Psychiatry)

Marijuana causes both dependence and addiction. Addictive use is defined by compulsive repeated use in spite of adverse consequences. Marijuana's effects include tolerance leading to dependence and inability to cease use. (Gold)

It's not just alcohol that causes impaired crashes. A roadside study of reckless drivers, who were not impaired by alcohol, showed that 45% of those drivers tested positive for marijuana. (Brookoff)

The effects of marijuana persist much longer than the effects of alcohol. Using a computerized flight simulator, an experiment on pilots showed that their ability to land a plane was still impaired 24 hours after smoking one marijuana cigarette. (Leirer)

Children exposed to marijuana prenatally have increased behavioral problems, and they have decreased visual perception, language comprehension, attention span and memory. (Fried)

In males, marijuana use diminishes testosterone production and lowers sperm count. In females, marijuana use disrupts hormone cycles. Marijuana is mutagenic, fetotoxic (poisonous to the fetus) and impairs RNA and DNA synthesis. (Gold, Latour and Nahas)

Marijuana impairs the white blood cells, which fight infection. Marijuana also causes decreased resistance to diseases such as herpes. Marijuana smokers have increased outpatient visits for respiratory illnesses, accidents and other illnesses. (Djeu, Spector, Watzl and Cabral)

Children prenatally exposed to marijuana experienced more than twice the number of sleep arousals at night and more awake time after each sleep arousal than children not prenatally exposed to marijuana. (Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine)

Cases of cancer from marijuana use are now well documented. In one California study 90% of young cancer patients are marijuana smokers compared with 40% of young people in California as a whole. (Donald)

HIV positive marijuana smokers have increased incidence of bacterial pneumonias in comparison to non-smokers. HIV positive smokers develop full-blown AIDS twice as fast as non-smokers. (Aids Weekly, 1993)

In a survey of 150 marijuana-using students, 59% surveyed report they sometimes forget what a conversation is about before it has ended. 41% report that, if they read while stoned, they remembered less of what they had read hours later. (Schwartz)

Long-term use of marijuana may cause irreversible memory problems. Marijuana users find it more difficult to separate irrelevant information from the relevant, their reaction times are longer and electrical activity of the brain is slowed. (Macquarie University)

Marijuana impairs perception, judgment, thinking, memory and learning. Memory defects may persist for 6 weeks after last marijuana use. (Schwartz)

There are significant negative effects of prenatal marijuana exposure on the performance of children in standard intelligence tests. On average, children exposed prenatally to marijuana will have a lower IQ compared to children who are not exposed. (Day)

A cannabis (marijuana)-state-dependent effect in users includes weaknesses in analytic and synthetic skills. This includes having difficulty sorting out information, synthesizing and classifying information correctly and understanding subtle shades of meaning. (Lundqvist)

Fetal Marijuana Symptoms are similar to Fetal Alcohol Syndrome---two diseases children are born with that are totally preventable. One of the leading specialists in cellular heredity, Dr. Akira Morishima of Columbia University, has said that in his 20 years of research on human cells he has never found any other drug, including heroin, which comes close to the DNA damage caused by marijuana.

Saying nobody ever died from smoking marijuana is like saying nobody ever died from smoking tobacco. Marijuana contains the same cancer causing chemicals as tobacco. Marijuana contains acetone, hydrogen cyanide, ammonia, carbon monoxide, benzene, benzopyrene, nitrosamines, and many other cancer causing pollutants. (Huber)

Who is really killing our rain forests? The United Nations reports that in Jamaica, marijuana growers plant their crops on isolated mountain slopes disturbing fragile forest soils. Growers clear, cut and destroy the forests exposing fertile soil to runoff and erosion, causing permanent damage to forests.

Marijuana causes many mental disorders, including acute toxic psychosis, panic attacks, flashbacks, delusions, depersonalization, hallucinations, paranoia, depression and "uncontrollable feelings of aggression." (Schwartz)

All of the above facts were compiled in a handout from Joan Bellm (10-19-96) with medical review by Bill Bennett and legal review by Bob Peterson. Each bite of information was based on research by different doctors, institutions, clinical publications, etc. and those individual resources can be obtained by contacting Sara Wolter at 402-483-4581, ext. 277 or swolter@lmef.org.

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