

Myths of Marijuana Use

Myth: “Marijuana is not harmful to your mental health.”

Fact: According to the CDC and the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), people who use marijuana are more likely to develop temporary psychosis (not knowing what is real, hallucinations, and paranoia) and long-lasting mental disorders, including schizophrenia. The association between marijuana and schizophrenia is stronger in people who start using marijuana frequently at an earlier age.

Myth: “Marijuana cures anxiety.”

Fact: According to the NIDA, there is evidence linking cannabis use to other mental illnesses and self-harm, including suicidal thoughts and behaviors.

Myth: “Marijuana is not addictive.”

Fact: According to the NIDA, higher THC levels may mean a greater risk for addiction if people are regularly exposing themselves to high doses.

Myth: “Vaping is better for you than smoking.”

Fact: The FDA has alerted the public to hundreds of reports of serious lung illnesses associated with vaping, many of the suspected products tested by federal health officials have been identified as containing THC.

LSUHSC Campus Assistance Program

About Us

The mission of the LSUHSC Campus Assistance Program (CAP) is to support the mental, emotional, and physical well-being of students, faculty, staff, and immediate family members in order to promote the overall health and effectiveness of the LSUHSC-NO community.

Contact Us

Phone: (504) 568-8888

Email: cap@lsuhsc.edu

Web:

<https://www.lsuhs.edu/orgs/campushealth/cap.aspx>

For Help, Call Today

A counselor is on call and available to you 24 hours a day, seven days a week. CAP is a free service provided to you by the university. The CAP counseling services are short term. However, if long-term services are required and a referral to an outside agency is appropriate, the CAP counselor will work with you to find the services that would best help you. Any contact that you have with the Campus Assistance Program is Confidential.

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Campus Assistance Program



Facts About Drugs: Marijuana

*Prepared by The LSUHSC Campus Assistance Program.
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Physical Effects of Marijuana

Besides the immediate effects marijuana can have, there are many more long-term effects on the body and mind of a habitual user.

Effects on the Brain

Short term effects include altered senses, changes in mood, impaired body movement, impaired memory, hallucinations/delusions (when taken in high doses). Using marijuana as a teenager may impair thinking, memory, and learning functions and affect how the brain builds connected between the areas necessary for these functions.

Effects on the Heart

Marijuana raises the heart rate for up to 3 hours after smoking, this may increase the chance of a heart attack.

Effects on the Lungs

Marijuana smoke irritates the lungs, and people who smoke marijuana frequently can have the same breathing problems as those who smoke tobacco. These problems include daily cough and phlegm, more frequent lung illness, and a higher risk of lung infections.

Effects on Pregnancy

Marijuana use during pregnancy is linked to lower birth weight and increased risk of both brain and behavioral problems in babies. Marijuana may affect certain developing parts of a fetus' brain, increasing risks of problems with attention, memory, and problem-solving compared to unexposed children.

What is Marijuana?

Marijuana is the dried flowers, leaves, and stems of the *Cannabis sativa* or *Cannabis indica* plant. Cannabis (marijuana) is one of the most used drugs in the United States. The plant contains the mind-altering chemical THC and other similar compounds. People smoke marijuana in hand-rolled cigarettes (joints) or in pipes or water pipes (bongs). They also smoke it in emptied cigars that have been partly or completely refilled with marijuana (blunts). To avoid inhaling smoke, some people are using vaporizers. These devices pull the active ingredients (including THC) from the marijuana and collect their vapor in a storage unit. Some vaporizers use a liquid marijuana extract. People also mix marijuana in food (edibles) or brew it as tea.

According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, in 2021, 35.4% of young adults aged 18 to 25 (11.8 million people) reported using marijuana in the past year. 60.3% of individuals who identified to using marijuana reported that their first use was before the age of 21.

Resources

The National Institute on Drug Abuse and Marijuana info page.

This page also includes links to other publications for helping with teens.

<https://nida.nih.gov/publications/drugfacts/cannabis-marijuana>

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

<https://www.samhsa.gov/>

Government drug information site for teens.

<https://nida.nih.gov/research-topics/parents-educators>

United States Drug Enforcement Administration

<https://www.dea.gov/factsheets/marijuana>

Partnership to End Addiction

<https://drugfree.org/>



LSUHSC-NO Policy on Substance Abuse

The illegal use, abuse, possession, manufacture, dispensation, distribution of, or being under the influence of controlled or illegal drugs is prohibited while at work, on call, on duty, at school, or engaged in Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center New Orleans campus (LSUHSC-NO) business on or off LSUHSC-NO premises. This Substance Abuse Policy applies to all faculty, staff, residents, and students of LSUHSC-NO. Students must understand that initial and continued enrollment is contingent upon compliance to this policy.