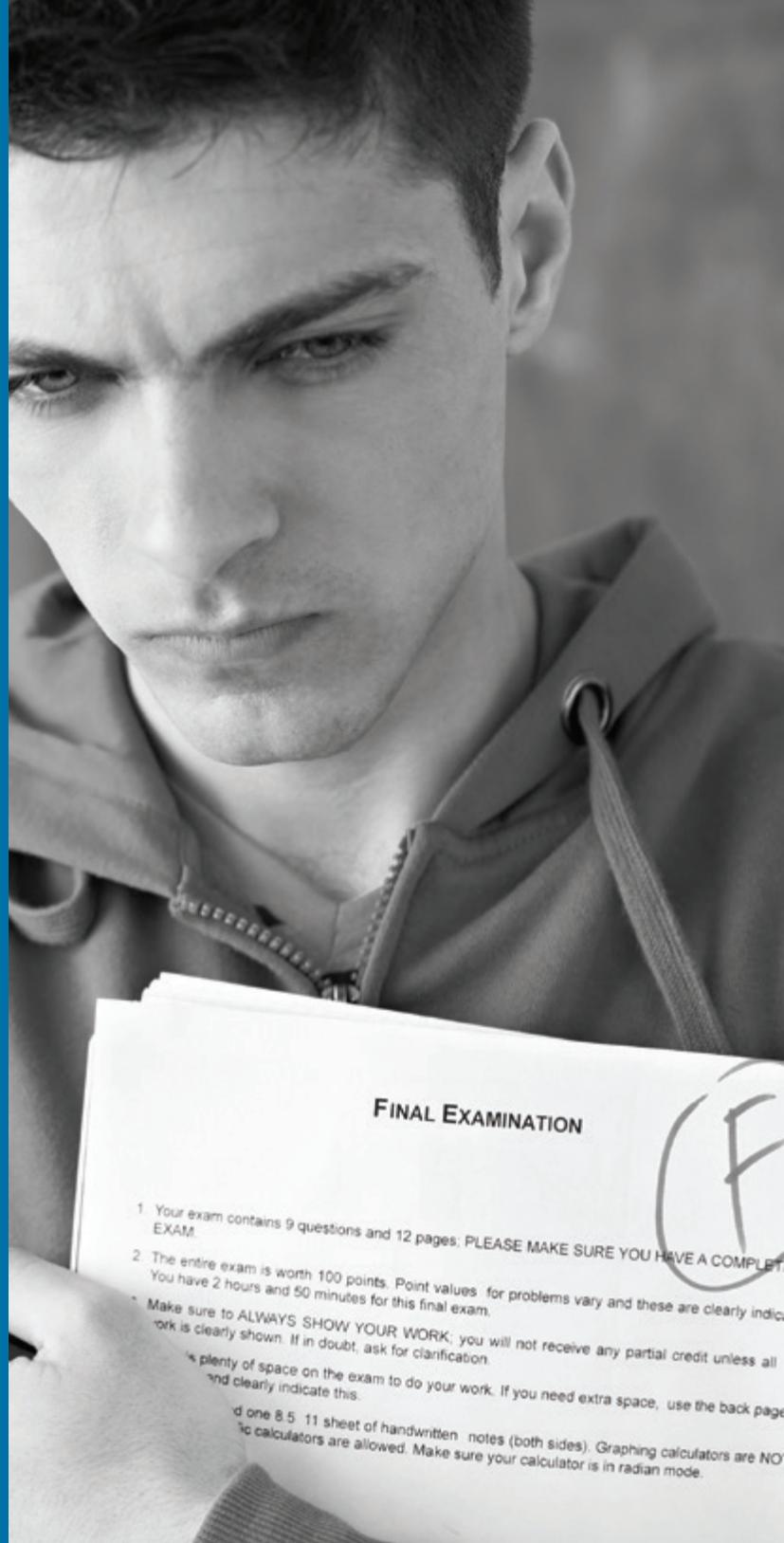


MARIJUANA: NOT AS HARMLESS AS YOU THINK

Recently marijuana has been approved for medical use in more than 20 states and its recreational use has even been legalized in Colorado and Washington. Although attitudes seem to be changing about whether or not marijuana is legal, the fact remains marijuana use is associated with health and developmental risks for both adults and teens:

- Marijuana is **particularly harmful to the still developing brains of young people**. It is connected to changes in adolescent brain development resulting in learning, memory problems and IQ loss.
- Smoking marijuana **can damage the brain** of a developing embryo as early as two weeks after conception.
- Marijuana smoke **contains 50-70% more carcinogenic hydrocarbons** than tobacco smoke.
- Marijuana use **increases the risk of psychosis**.
- Marijuana use may cause **bronchitis and lung complications**.
- There is a possibility that street marijuana is laced with other dangerous substances, such as: cocaine, crack, PCP or even embalming fluid.



WHAT'S INSIDE?

- ALTERED STATES: MARIJUANA IN AMERICA
- LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES
- MARIJUANA AND LEGALIZATION
- MEDICAL MARIJUANA AND MEDICATIONS
- TREATMENT OPTIONS FOR MARIJUANA ABUSE

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HOW MARIJUANA WORKS

Marijuana, also known as cannabis, has what are called psychoactive chemicals, the main one being 'tetrahydrocannabinol' or THC for short. When you smoke marijuana, the THC goes into your lungs and then into your heart, which pumps it into your bloodstream and then takes it directly to your brain. When marijuana is smoked, it only takes a few minutes for the THC to get to the brain, whereas if it is eaten, it would take a little longer because it first has to pass through the digestive system.

Once it's in your brain, the THC activates what are called 'receptors,' and gives you the feeling of being high. In short, **marijuana changes the physical and chemical balance in your brain** and this is what people refer to as a 'high.'



WHAT IT FEELS LIKE

Depending upon the user and setting, the effects and categorization of marijuana can vary from a **stimulant** to a **depressant** to a **hallucinogen**. The effects can begin within a few minutes after inhaling, and can last 2 to 3 hours after initial intoxication. Marijuana affects every user differently and those effects can depend on:

- The **person** – their mood, personality, size and weight;
- The **amount** taken and whether it is mixed with anything else;
- The **environment** in which the drug is used.

Many users describe two phases of the marijuana high: **initial stimulation** (giddiness and euphoria), followed by **sedation** and a pleasant tranquility. Users also report **altered perceptions of distance** and time along with a heightened **sensitivity to sights and sounds**. While some users may experience lowered inhibitions, drowsiness, and contentment, others may feel **great anxiety** and **paranoia**.

HAVE YOU HEARD OF DRUGGED DRIVING?

Smoking marijuana affects alertness, concentration, perception, coordination and reaction time, which can have a negative effect on many of the skills required for safe driving. It's not uncommon for a person who drives high on marijuana to have a difficult time judging distances and reacting to signals and sound. Furthermore, effects such as these may last several hours after smoking marijuana.

Actually, whether a person feels impaired or not, if they have THC in their blood or urine, they are considered to be Driving Under the Influence (DUI) in Illinois. **A DUI in Illinois has penalties that range from time in jail to a \$25,000 fine.**

LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES

Marijuana use can impair learning, memory, perception and judgment. It can lead to dulled emotions and lack of enthusiasm. Other effects of marijuana use include:

Difficulty speaking, listening effectively, retaining knowledge, problem solving and forming new concepts

Reduced alertness/concentration

Altered perceptions

Decrease in reaction time

Lower IQ for adolescents

Research has shown that marijuana's negative effects on attention, memory and learning can last for days or weeks after the acute effects of the drug wear off. Consequently, someone who smokes marijuana daily may be functioning at a reduced intellectual level most or all of the time. Not surprisingly, evidence suggests that, compared with their nonsmoking peers, students who smoke marijuana tend to get lower grades and are more likely to drop out of high school.

A meta-analysis of 48 relevant studies—one of the most thorough performed to date—found cannabis use to be associated consistently with reduced educational attainment (e.g., grades and chances of graduating). Furthermore, marijuana users themselves report poor outcomes on a variety of life satisfaction and achievement measures.

One study compared current and former long-term heavy users of marijuana with a control group who reported smoking cannabis at least once in their lives but not more than 50 times. Despite similar education and income backgrounds, significant differences were found in educational attainment: fewer of the heavy users of cannabis completed college, and more had yearly household incomes of less than \$30,000. When asked how marijuana affected their cognitive abilities, career achievements, social lives, and physical and mental health, the majority of heavy cannabis users reported the drug's negative effects on all of these measures.

Source: NIH

Did You Know?

Someone who smokes marijuana daily may be functioning at a reduced intellectual level most or all of the time.

ALTERED STATES: MARIJUANA IN AMERICA

From board rooms to family rooms, marijuana legalization continues to be a hot topic in the news, political debates and casual conversations. This is largely due to rapidly changing attitudes toward marijuana in the United States.

- Marijuana is **the most commonly used illicit drug in America** with 17.4 million past-month users and used by 76.8% of current illicit drug users.*
- The **majority of American adults (55%) now support legalization of marijuana**, according to a January 2014 poll by NBC News and Wall Street Journal,

In light of this collective shift in attitudes towards marijuana in America, Gateway Treatment Centers are analyzing the potential consequences of marijuana use.

MARIJUANA AND LEGALIZATION

State and Federal Laws

While marijuana possession remains illegal under federal law, as of March 2014, 20 states have legalized medical marijuana possession. Currently Illinois and Michigan are the only two Midwestern states that have legalized medical marijuana.

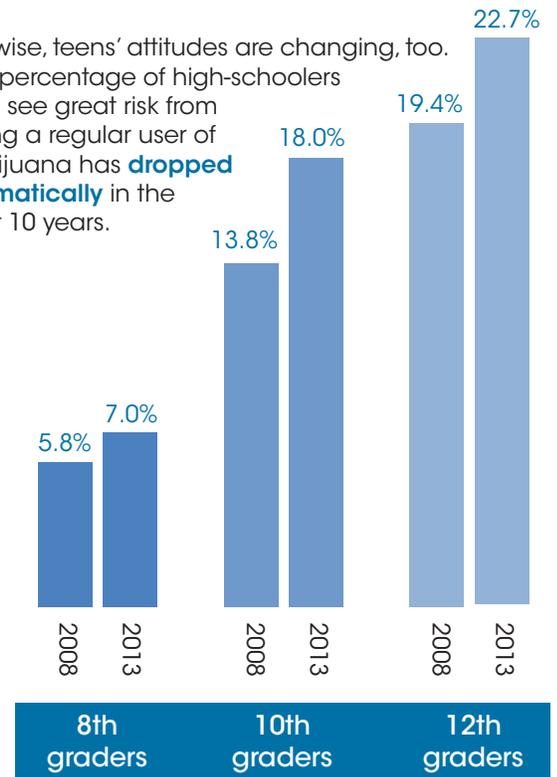
Colorado and Washington have even legalized marijuana for recreational use. Despite these changes in public opinion, marijuana possession is still a crime in Illinois. Illinois laws forbid drivers from operating a motor vehicle if they have a detectable level of an illicit drug or drug metabolite present in their bodily fluids above a specific, state-imposed threshold.

*Source: NSDUH

TEEN USE TRENDING UP

The most recent Monitoring the Future survey, which annually measures teen drug trends among the nation's 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-graders, shows a persistent high rate of marijuana use among high school students.

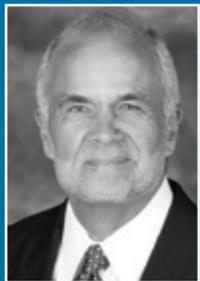
Likewise, teens' attitudes are changing, too. The percentage of high-schoolers who see great risk from being a regular user of marijuana has **dropped dramatically** in the past 10 years.



TREATMENT FOR MARIJUANA ABUSE AT GATEWAY TREATMENT CENTERS

At Gateway Treatment Centers, we offer personalized treatment plans for people who abuse marijuana as well as alcohol and other drugs. Our dedicated team of substance abuse experts provides the counseling and therapy people need to help rebuild positive connections, improve relationships and identify the triggers that lead to excessive, extended use of a drug like marijuana. Relapse prevention planning also is an important aspect of treatment to help individuals improve their ability to function in all types of settings and circumstances.

Through both Residential and Outpatient Treatment Programs, Gateway provides adults, teens and young men with options that can help them manage their substance abuse on an ongoing basis.



"We provide treatment options that equip a person with the recovery tools needed to manage substance abuse on an ongoing basis."

Dr. John Larson
Medical Director
Gateway Alcohol & Drug Treatment



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MEDICAL MARIJUANA

On August 2, 2013, Illinois Governor Pat Quinn signed the *Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Pilot Program Act* and as of January 1, 2014, the Act established a four-year pilot program in Illinois that authorizes the cultivation and distribution of medical cannabis for the use of registered qualifying patients (RQPs). These patients are those who have certain specified debilitating medical conditions and obtain state registration cards.

Debilitating medical conditions include 40 chronic diseases and conditions such as:

- Cancer
- HIV and AIDS
- Crohn's disease
- Severe fibromyalgia
- Rheumatoid arthritis
- Multiple sclerosis
- Parkinson's disease



Are "medical" and "street" marijuana different?

In principle, no. Most marijuana sold in dispensaries as medicine is the same quality and carries the same health risks as marijuana sold on the street.

However, given the therapeutic interest in cannabidiol (CBD) to treat certain conditions, such as childhood epilepsy, strains with a higher than normal CBD:THC ratio have been specially bred and sold for medicinal purposes; these may be less desirable to recreational users because they have weaker psychoactive effects.

Cannabinoids in medicine

Cannabis has been used medically for thousands of years. In 2700 BCE, Shen Neng, Chinese Emperor and father of Chinese medicine, used cannabis as a remedy. The Ebers Papyrus, an ancient Egyptian medical text, also mentions cannabis. It was written in 1500 BCE and is one of the oldest pharmaceutical works known.

Two FDA-approved drugs, Dronabinol and Nabilone, contain THC and are used to treat nausea caused by chemotherapy and wasting disease (extreme weight loss) caused by AIDS.

HELPING PEOPLE GET THEIR LIVES BACK

Gateway Treatment Centers specialize in providing personalized treatment plans to help you or someone you love get life back on track. Our integrated treatment programs go beyond treating addictive behaviors to address the underlying reasons one's addictive behavior began in the first place.

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Lake Villa
847-356-8205

Pekin
309-346-7800

Springfield
217-529-9266

Swansea
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Insurance Accepted



THE JOINT COMMISSION ACCREDITED

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MORE WAYS TO STAY INFORMED



Gateway Foundation also provides treatment to individuals who may be eligible for services funded in whole, or in part, by the Illinois Department of Human Services.