

THE DRUG FILE: MARIJUANA

Street Names:

Weed, Grass, Pot, Dope, Mary Jane, Ganja, Herb, Chronic

Description:

- Marijuana is a mind-altering drug that affects a person's mood, perception and behaviour.
- Marijuana can be smoked in a cigarette, "joint", or in a pipe, or ingested by baking it into foods.
- Marijuana contains a chemical known as THC.
 - ◇ The amount of THC determines how strong the high will be.
 - ◇ THC acts on receptors in the brain called cannabinoid receptors.
 - ◇ These receptors are found in the limbic region and hippocampus of the brain.

Origin and Medical Usage:

- Marijuana comes from a plant called cannabis sativa.
- This plant grows wild, but is also cultivated indoors and outdoors.
- Marijuana is produced by growing the plant, then drying the buds, leaves and flowers.
 - ◇ After they are dried, the leaves are cut up finely and rolled into cigarettes or joints and smoked.

Short-Term Effects of Use:

The short-term effects of use of marijuana include:

- Increased Heart Rate
- Anxiety
- Increased Appetite
- Impaired Perception
- Paranoia
- Impaired Judgement
- Loss of Co-ordination
- Loss of Concentration
- Bloodshot Eyes
- Dry Mouth
- Hallucinations and Delusions

Effects from eating marijuana come on more gradually and last longer than the effects from smoking it.

Long-Term Effects of Use:

The long-term effects of marijuana use may include:

- Diminished Short-Term Memory
- Drop in Grades or School Performance
- Damage to the Respiratory, Immune and Reproductive Systems
- Increased Risk of Cancer
- Heightened Risk of Lung Infection
- Loss of Friends

Withdrawal:

When people stop using marijuana, they may experience withdrawal symptoms such as:

- Anxiety
- Loss of Appetite
- Irritability
- Trouble Sleeping

Legal Status:

Unlawful possession of marijuana is a criminal offence.

Signs That a Person Might Be Using:

The signs that someone may be using marijuana include, but are not limited to:

- Bloodshot Eyes
- Dilated Pupils
- Smell of Marijuana on Their Clothes or in Their Room
- Finding Drug Paraphernalia Such as Papers for Rolling Cigarettes, Bongs or Pipes
- Sleepy Appearance
- Sudden Lack of Motivation
- Decrease in Short-Term Memory