**Mishaps of Marijuana 1/28/22**

As things always happen to do, another trend has been resurfacing for the past decade, and that trend, is marijuana use. Marijuana seems to be a fairly common drug used by young adolescents and adults alike that gets its hype for not being quite as “lethal” as some of the other drugs out there. While this may be true to some extent, marijuana use can have its consequences, including early-onset schizophrenia in teen users, psychosis, and physiological complications in the heart and digestive system.

**What is Marijuana?**

According to the NIDA, m[arijuana](https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/marijuana/what-marijuana) is a product extracted from the plant *Cannabis sativa* that can be smoked, inhaled, eaten, etc. (2021). There are two main types of Marijuana (arguably the most common forms that we hear about in the media): CBD and THC. Both of these chemical compounds are similar, in fact they have almost the same chemical structure, yet they have different effects when consumed by humans. CBD aka cannabidiol lacks the psychotic component—this means that it does not alter your mental state at normal dosages—and can be used to medicinally treat seizures, inflammation, chronic joint pain, IBS, migraines, and even mental disorders like anxiety and depression. On the other hand, [THC aka tetrahydrocannabinol](https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/marijuana" \l ":~:text=Physical Effects&text=These problems include daily cough,in people who smoke marijuana.&text=Increased heart rate.,to 3 hours after smoking.). THC does alter one’s mental state, causing the feeling of a “high.” THC alters your senses, mood, cognition and problem solving, impair your memory, and may even induce paranoid, hallucinations, and delusions if taken at high enough doses or used over a long period of time. Both CBD and THC act on endocannabinoid receptors in the brain to release dopamine, but the effects are very different (Holland, 2020).

**How Does Marijuana Affect You?**

For those addicted to marijuana, the most concerning aspect of the drug is the side effect of **avolition**, or the complete lack of motivation to do anything—this avolition can prevent you from wanting to bathe, dress, go to work, go to class, take out the trash, and take the necessary steps to managing your addiction (Pacheco-Colón, et al., R, 2018). In addition, early use of marijuana (teens and young adults) can induce [schizophrenia](https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/schizophrenia/what-is-schizophrenia" \l ":~:text=Schizophrenia is a chronic brain,thinking and lack of motivation.), a chronic mental disorder characterized by hallucinations and/or delusions, disorganized speech, and avolition. Age, duration of use, and genetics play a large role in the [development of schizophrenia from marijuana use](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6861931/), but the likelihood is much greater for those who use marijuana as teenagers (Pearson & Berry, 2019).

**What Should I Remember?**

First, remember that an addiction is a chronic relapsing disease where the structure and function of the brain have changed in response to the use of alcohol or a substance, including marijuana. Second, while marijuana may have some positive uses and may not be as deadly as alcohol or fentanyl, it can still be harmful to an individual who uses it without restraint. Marijuana can cause psychotic symptoms and even permanent brain damage, inducing schizophrenia in teens who use too early. Likewise, marijuana can lead to a lack of motivation, which can lead you to not want to do anything and make you complacent with occupations or circumstances that are less than ideal. Lastly, you need to harvest and maximize your potential, and overcoming your addiction to marijuana is a critical step towards doing so.

**References**

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