



DRUG FACT SHEET

Marijuana

Marijuana is the most widely available and used illegal drug in the U.S.

Class of drug:	Cannabis
Main active ingredient:	THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol), which causes the mind-altering effects
What it looks like:	Greenish-gray mixture of dried, shredded leaves, stems, seeds and flowers of Cannabis sativa, the hemp plant
Street names:	Pot, Grass, Weed, Reefer, Dope, Mary Jane, Sinsemilla, Acapulco Gold, Thai Sticks, Ganga
How it is used:	Smoked in hand-rolled cigarettes (joints), water pipes (bongs) or cigars (blunts) Eaten in foods or used to brew tea Concentrated into a resin called hash oil that is made with butane and other flammable chemical solvents. Hash oil is usually smoked in vaporizers or e-cigarettes
Duration of high:	Smoked —effects begin immediately after the drug enters the brain and last from one to three hours Ingested —effects begin one-half to one hour after ingested and last as long as four hours
Withdrawal symptoms:	Irritability, difficulty sleeping, anxiety, depression
Detected in the body:	Occasional use —one to seven days Chronic use —one to four weeks
Effects:	THC concentrations in marijuana are much higher today than in the past causing harsher effects leading to psychosis, hallucinations and more hospitalizations Physical —increased heart rate, bloodshot eyes, dry mouth and throat, increased appetite Mental —pleasant sensations and colors, intensified perception of sounds, impaired or reduced short-term memory and comprehension, altered sense of time, reduced ability to perform tasks requiring concentration and coordination Long-term —damage to the tissue of the lungs and pulmonary system, cancer, negative effect on the development of adolescents, impaired immune system



Marijuana is one of the oldest psychoactive plants. The first direct reference to cannabis as a psychoactive agent dates back to 2700 B.C.

U.S. information

In 2013, 39.5 percent of 12th graders viewed regular use of marijuana as harmful, while 6.5 percent reported daily marijuana use. In 1993, 72.5 percent of 12th graders viewed regular use of marijuana as harmful, while 2.4 percent reported daily marijuana use.

In 2013, 8.6 percent of high school students in the United States reported that they tried marijuana for the first time before the age of 13. Approximately 41 percent of students said they had used marijuana at least once in their lifetime, compared to 33 percent two decades ago.

(Monitoring the Future Survey; U.S. Center for Disease Control Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2013)