

Marijuana

Facts and Your Health



Marijuana is a greenish-gray mixture of the dried, shredded leaves, stems, seeds and flowers of *Cannabis sativa* – the hemp plant. Smoking is the most common way people use marijuana, though it can also be used in other forms such as edibles, powders and oils.

In Colorado, both medical and retail marijuana are legal.

There are more than 200 marijuana terms used in the United States. The most common are:

- Weed
- Bud
- Chronic
- Dope
- Grass
- Ganga
- Cheeba
- Dank
- Kine/Kind bud
- Kush
- Pot
- Schwag
- Skunk

What is the difference between medical marijuana and retail marijuana?

Medical marijuana is marijuana used to treat qualifying, medical conditions such as cancer, epilepsy, glaucoma, HIV/AIDS and severe pain. Retail marijuana is for personal use.

The laws for marijuana use in Colorado differ based on the type used.

Who can legally use retail marijuana, and who is at risk?

In Denver, people 21 years of age and older can legally buy and use retail marijuana. Marijuana use is not recommended for adolescents or pregnant women.

- Research shows that daily use of marijuana during adolescent years results in impaired learning, memory and decreased IQ.
- There is no safe amount of marijuana use during pregnancy. Using marijuana while pregnant can be harmful for the unborn baby. Marijuana that passes to your baby during pregnancy may make it hard for your child to pay attention and learn, especially as your child grows older. This could make school harder for them.

continued

How do I know if someone has been smoking marijuana?

Signs and symptoms of marijuana use can be different for everyone. Some common signs include:

- Fast heart rate
- Increased blood pressure
- Red eyes
- Dry mouth
- Increased appetite or “the munchies”
- Poor coordination
- Slowed reaction time

These effects are reduced after three or four hours. However, marijuana stays in your system for as long as a month after smoking.

Is marijuana addictive?

One in six people who engage in marijuana use as a teen will develop an addiction to marijuana.

Is it true that marijuana is stronger and more potent than in the past?

Yes. The average potency of marijuana has more than doubled since 1998.

Can someone die from marijuana use?

No recorded cases of overdose deaths from marijuana have been found. However, marijuana use can cause accidents and medical problems that lead to death.

Are synthetic marijuana substances the same as marijuana?

No. Synthetic marijuana is not a natural product. Chemicals that are often sprayed on synthetic marijuana can cause a stronger high in users when smoked, and may also cause anxiety attacks, hallucinations, kidney failure and seizures.

Is it safe to drive if I have been smoking?

Marijuana use increases the risk of car crashes. It is illegal to drive under the influence of marijuana and it can result in a DUI, just like alcohol.

What do I do if my child or pet ingests or smokes marijuana?

Call 9-1-1 or a veterinarian if you are worried about the health and safety of your child or pet. Marijuana should be kept securely away from children and pets.

Are there health benefits to using marijuana?

Medicinal marijuana is commonly used in Colorado. Consult your doctor for more information.

SOURCES:

Denver Public Health
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
National Institute on Drug Abuse
City of Denver



DenverHealth.org



© 2015 Denver Health

**DENVER
HEALTH**

