



**PARTNERS for PREVENTION**  
A partnership for the prevention of substance abuse among youth!

## **MARIJUANA**

Marijuana is the most frequently used illicit drug in the world today. The term marijuana, as commonly used, refers to the leaves and flowering buds of *Cannabis sativa*, the hemp plant. It is usually smoked (joints, pipes, bong, blunts) and the effects can be felt within minutes and usually last three to four hours. Many users often feel the effects the next day.

Smoke from the herbal cannabis contains all the toxic constituents of tobacco smoke (without the drug Nicotine) including irritants, tumor initiators, tumor promoters and carcinogens and carbon monoxide. Three to four cannabis cigarettes a day are associated with the same evidence of acute and chronic bronchitis and the same degree of damage to the bronchial mucus as 20 or more tobacco cigarettes a day (*Source: British Medical Association*).

Short term effects include impaired short-term memory, impaired attention and judgment, impaired coordination and balance, increased heart rate, dry mouth, red eyes and increased appetite. With long term use, anxiety, panic, paranoia are often experienced. Medical complications include an increased risk of chronic cough, bronchitis and emphysema; increased risk of cancer of the head neck and lungs; a decrease in testosterone levels and lower sperm counts for men; an increase in testosterone levels for women and increased risk of infertility.

After smoking one joint, 10-20% of the THC (Delta-9-Tetrahydrocannabinol) is still present in body fat cells after 30 days. This is due to the fact that THC is not water-soluble and remains in the fat cells of the body for long periods.

There are many slang terms for Marijuana including: Grass, Indo, Pot, Chunky, Swag, Doobee, Drag Weed, Ganja, Angola, Reefer. Mary, Mary Jane, etc...