



Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

Clint Eastwood Youth Program



"It's no big deal. It's only marijuana."

Many people still believe marijuana use is not a big deal. Others remember the images from the film "Refer Madness." Recent studies on marijuana have shown it to be a potent and dangerous drug.

Effects of marijuana use

- Marijuana has been linked to lung cancer, loss of short-term memory, and slowed driving reaction times.
- Marijuana can cause psychological dependence and, with heavy use, can cause withdrawal symptoms.
- Marijuana can make the user withdrawn and paranoid.
- Marijuana can prevent teens from developing a normal sense of "self," and can interfere with the development of identity, emotional maturity, and self-esteem.
- Marijuana can result in apathy characterized by lack of initiative, little concern about the future, and poor motivation.
- Marijuana affects reproduction and can cause complications with pregnancy.
- Researchers found that THC changes the way in which sensory information gets into and is processed by the part of the brain that is crucial for learning, memory, and the integration of sensory experiences with emotions and motivations. A study of college students has shown that skills related to attention, memory, and learning are impaired among people who use marijuana heavily, even after discontinuing use for at least 24 hours.
- Marijuana abuse is associated with many detrimental health effects including frequent respiratory infections, increased heart rate, anxiety, and panic attacks.

- Marijuana meets the criteria for an addictive drug, and animal studies suggest marijuana causes physical dependence and, possibly, withdrawal symptoms.
- Someone who smokes marijuana regularly may have many of the same respiratory problems as tobacco smokers including daily cough and phlegm, symptoms of chronic bronchitis, and more frequent chest colds. Continuing to smoke marijuana can lead to abnormal functioning of lung tissue injured or destroyed by marijuana smoke.

Marijuana Use:

- It can be easier to obtain marijuana than cigarettes or alcohol.
- Marijuana use is more common than cocaine use and can be harder to spot than alcohol use.
- A 2002 SAMHSA report, "Initiation of Marijuana Use: Trends, Patterns and Implications," concludes that the younger children are when they first use marijuana, the more likely they are to use cocaine and heroin and become dependent on drugs as adults.
- According to the 2001 "Monitoring the Future" study, 49% of 12th, 40% of 10th, and 20% of 8th graders had used marijuana in their lifetime. In 2001, 37% of seniors, 33% of 10th, and 15% of 8th graders had used marijuana in the past year. Also in 2001, 22% of seniors, 20% of 10th, and 9% of 8th graders had used marijuana in the past month. The 2001 study also found that 5.8% of 12th, 4.5% of 10th, 1.3% of 8th graders had used marijuana daily in the past 30 days before the survey.

** Statistics from Office of National Drug Policy*

This information is brought to you by Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula's Clint Eastwood Youth Program, providing a structured program to treat drug and alcohol abuse as well as mental health problems.

**For more information or to schedule a free screening, please call
(831) 373-0924 or (800) 528-8080.**



Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES
Clint Eastwood Youth Program

Hartnell Professional Center, 576 Hartnell Street, Monterey, CA 93940
clinteastwoodyouthprogram@chomp.org

A private, not-for-profit organization