

Information Regarding Marijuana Dependence and Withdrawal

There are hundreds of natural components found within the marijuana plant. The most abundant and well-known of these components is tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), which is the chemical compound, or cannabinoid, responsible for the psychoactive effects of the plant. THC, and other cannabinoids found within the marijuana plant, affect the user by interacting with receptors located throughout the body. Many marijuana users will experience feelings of euphoria and relaxation. Some users may experience negative reactions such as mild hallucinations, feelings of paranoia and anxiety, and upset stomach. These negative experiences usually come as a result of overuse.

Marijuana does effect the mental state of the user, and usually provides feelings of relaxation and euphoria. As a result, certain individuals may develop cravings for or dependency on the plant. Signs of marijuana dependency may include: cravings, trying to quit or cut back without success, falling behind at school or work, impaired cognition and/or memory retention, excessive lethargy, a general disregard for responsibilities, using marijuana even though it's having a negative effect on your life, and even using marijuana in situations where it is dangerous (while operating heavy machinery).¹ It is important to note that the above symptoms must be connected to marijuana use, and NOT another health condition.¹

Withdrawal symptoms may occur in chronic marijuana users. Individuals suffering marijuana withdrawals may experience irritability, difficulty sleeping, restlessness, anger, aggression, nervousness, anxiety, decrease in appetite/ weight loss, depressed mood or physical symptoms including abdominal pain, shakiness, sweating, fever/ chills and headache.¹

The psychological consequences of prolonged marijuana use aren't completely understood.

If you or someone you know is struggling with marijuana addiction, you may want to seek help. Help is available online through The Massachusetts Substance Abuse Helpline at www.helpline-online.com. You may also call (800) 327-5050.

¹ Citation: Miller NS, Oberbarnscheidt T, Gold MS (2017) Marijuana Addictive Disorders: DSM-5 Substance-Related Disorders. J Addict Res Ther S11: 013. doi:[10.4172/2155-6105.1000S11-013](https://doi.org/10.4172/2155-6105.1000S11-013)