




# THE FACTS ABOUT MARIJUANA

## What Is Marijuana?

- Marijuana is derived from the cannabis sativa plant that contains the psychoactive substance Delta-9 Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and can be consumed by smoking, edibles, oils and vaporizers.
- Endocannabinoids (ECB) are natural proteins in the brain that help regulate the central nervous system including pain, immune system and mood.
- Cannabinoids (CBD) are a group of natural chemical compounds derived from cannabis that stimulate ECB.
- Most marijuana found in dispensaries come from two types of cannabis: sativas (higher THC levels) and indicas (higher CBD levels).

## Common Forms of Marijuana

	<b>Smoking</b>	Onset: 0-10mins Peak: 30mins Duration: 1-4hrs
	<b>Edible</b>	Onset: 60-90mins Peak: 2-3hrs Duration: 6-8hrs
	<b>Concentrate</b>	Onset: 5-60mins Peak: 1-2hrs Duration: 1-4hrs

*The average potency of a recreational cannabis product is 12% THC and can be up to 90% THC.*

- Effects of marijuana include changes in pain, appetite, slowed reaction time, poor coordination, forgetfulness, decreased clarity of thought and potential for dependency and addiction.
- The effects of THC are variable based on the strain, potency, production and type of product consumed.

## Reducing Harm

- Abstinence is the best way to avoid risk.
- Use less frequently to reduce dependency.
- Avoid using with alcohol and medications for pain or sleep, as their effects can exacerbate pre-existing health conditions.
- Designate a sober driver – a cab ride is cheaper than a DUI (>\$10k on average).
- Keep marijuana away from children, adolescents and pets.
- Talk to your healthcare provider about other ways to reduce harm.

## Risks Of Marijuana Use

- Addiction occurs in 9% of overall users, 17% of adolescent users, and 25-50% of habitual (daily) users.
- Car accidents occur for intoxicated drivers at a rate of almost twice the rate of sober drivers.
- Use can cause intensified depression, anxiety, paranoia, and risk of suicide among people with pre-existing mental health conditions and older adults.
- Adolescent habitual users are more likely to experience increased anxiety-related behaviors, depression, difficulties with memory, attention, learning, and poor academic engagement.
- Habitual use of THC with alcohol can lead to dulling of the body's ability to regulate pain, mood, protect against illness, and can increase anxiety, depression and stress sensitivity.

## Avoid Marijuana If You:

- Are under the age of 21.
  - Are going to drive a vehicle or operate machinery.
  - Are pregnant or breast-feeding.
  - Have a health condition made worse by marijuana such as anxiety, depression, respiratory or immune system issues
  - Are going to have surgery.
  - Take medications that interact with marijuana.
- 
- Know the laws – marijuana is currently illegal on the federal level and listed as a Schedule I controlled substance.
  - Know your drug-free workplace policy and what may occur if you fail a drug test.

## How Long Marijuana Stays In Your System

Factors that affect how long marijuana stays in your system include body weight/fat content, potency, health issues and medications.

<b>After one use</b>	3 days
<b>When using 4 times a week</b>	5-7 days
<b>When using daily</b>	10-15 days
<b>After using heavily for at least one month</b>	More than 30 days

*Marijuana users may carry traces in their bodies for up to a 90-day period resulting in a positive drug screen.*

To find a treatment provider, visit:  
[www.colorado.gov/LADDERS](http://www.colorado.gov/LADDERS)

For source citations visit [sbirtcolorado.org](http://sbirtcolorado.org)



Peer Assistance Services



**COLORADO**  
Office of Behavioral Health  
Department of Human Services

[info@peerassist.org](mailto:info@peerassist.org) • [www.AllInColorado.org](http://www.AllInColorado.org) • 303-369-0039 x524 • 1-866-369-0039 x524