



# MARIJUANA MYTHS AND FACTS

## DONT BE FOOLED BY POT INDUSTRY PROMISES

**MYTH: MARIJUANA IS GOOD FOR MENTAL HEALTH.**

**FACT**

Marijuana can cause psychosis, schizophrenia, anxiety, and depression. It is linked closely with suicide, and is a major risk factor for mental illness. *(DiForti et al., 2019, Hjorthøjetal., 2021, Henquetetal.,2005; Marconi et al.,2016;Mustonenet al., 2018; Niemi-Pynttäre et al., 2013)*

**MYTH: MARIJUANA IS NOT ADDICTIVE.**

**FACT**

Marijuana is addictive. Hundreds of thousands of Americans seek treatment for marijuana every year. Peer-reviewed research has determined that between 21 and 30% of users have a marijuana use disorder. (NIDA, 2019a) If a user is below the age of 18, they are SEVEN TIMES more likely to develop a marijuana use disorder. (NIDA, 2019a) More teens seek treatment for marijuana addiction than seek treatment for any other drug. *(SAMHSA, 2022)*

**MYTH: MARIJUANA IS MEDICINE.**

**FACT**

No major medical association supports marijuana as medicine. Marijuana is made of hundreds of components and does not meet FDA standards for safe and effective medicine. *(AMA, 2015; NAS, 2020)*

**MYTH: IF WE LEGALIZE MARIJUANA, USE WILL BE LIMITED TO ADULTS.**

**FACT**

States that have legal marijuana have seen an exploding illicit market and increasing rates of youth drug use. In states that have legalized “adult use” marijuana, 12–17-year-olds have experienced a 25% increase in marijuana use disorder compared to non-legal states. *(Cerde et.al, 2020)*

**MYTH: TODAY’S MARIJUANA IS THE SAME AS IT WAS IN THE 1970’S.**

**FACT**

Marijuana potency has increased significantly and rapidly. Marijuana in the 1970s had an average of 2% THC (the psychoactive component in marijuana), but today average potency ranges from 18-35% and products as high as 99% are produced and sold by the industry.

High potency products are more addictive and result in worse health outcomes for users, especially teens and young adults.

**MYTH: MARIJUANA IS A TREATMENT FOR PAIN AND COULD HELP SOLVE THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC.**

**FACT**

Marijuana not only fails to mitigate pain but results in lower pain thresholds. *(American Society of Anesthesiologists, 2021)* Marijuana legalization is associated with more opioid use and fatalities. Lifetime use of marijuana is the #1 risk factor for opioid misuse. *(CDC, 2020)*

**MYTH: MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION DOES NOT IMPACT ROAD SAFETY.**

**FACT**

Marijuana has been implicated in 25 percent of road deaths in Colorado. *(CO Division of Criminal Justice,2020)*

**MYTH: LEGALIZING MARIJUANA WILL ELIMINATE THE ILLICIT MARKET FOR MARIJUANA.**

**FACT**

No state has eliminated or even reduced the illicit market. Between 70-80% of marijuana sold in California legal pot shops was produced and grown illegally. *(NBC News, 2022)*

**MYTH: MARIJUANA USE IS NOT DANGEROUS TO PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HEALTH AND INCIDENTS OF NEGATIVE HEALTH OUTCOMES ARE RARE.**

**FACT**

At least 56 scientific studies have confirmed the link between high-potency marijuana and psychosis.

*(Vander Steur, Batalla, Bossong, 2020)*

Multiple scientific studies have now also linked THC to IQ Loss, psychosis, schizophrenia, depression and suicidality.

Marijuana users are 25% more likely to need emergency care and hospitalization. *(Vozoris et al., 2022)* Between 2011 and 2021, marijuana-related emergency department visits increased by 77% to over 800,000 ED visits. *(DAWN, 2011&2021)*

Among teenagers in Colorado, emergency department visits were 71% for psychiatric events. *(Dr. Ken Finn, 2019)*

**MYTH: MARIJUANA WILL GENERATE A WINDFALL OF TAX REVENUE.**

**FACT**

Marijuana accounts for less than 1% of state budgets in states that have legalized, and no state has made the money that advocates project.

A Colorado study found that for every \$1 in marijuana tax revenue, the state spends \$4.50 offsetting the costs of legalization *(CCU, 2017)*.

Tax revenue as a percentage of state budgets for FY 21-22:

- Colorado – 0.09%
- Alaska – 0.29%
- Oregon – 0.3%
- California – 0.49%

**MYTH: MOST PEOPLE SUPPORT LEGALIZATION.**

**FACT**

Between 60 and 71% of localities in California, Colorado, New York, and New Jersey have voted to “opt-out” of commercial marijuana sales. *(Nieves, 2021; Fuego, 2019; Rockefeller Institute of Government, 2022; MJBizDaily, 2021)*

**MYTH: MARIJUANA DOESN'T HARM THE ENVIRONMENT.**

**FACT**

Marijuana is an environmental blight that consumes massive amounts of energy, pollutes the air and water supply, results in land cover changes, and uses harmful pesticides. Marijuana production is nearly **FOUR TIMES** more energy intensive than coal or oil production. *(Reitz, 2015)*

It takes more water to grow marijuana than any other conventional crop, including wheat and rice. Indoor marijuana grows emit as much CO2 as 3.3 million cars. *(Larkin & Sweeney, 2022)*

**MYTH: MARIJUANA IS NOT AS HARMFUL FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND CAN HELP MENTAL HEALTH.**

**FACT**

Research shows that marijuana use changes the structure of the brain and heavy, lifelong use can result in IQ loss. *(Hill & Hsu, 2022)* In Colorado, marijuana is the number one substance found in youth suicide toxicology reports. *(Roberts, 2019)*

**MYTH: MARIJUANA CAN HELP ALLEVIATE MORNING SICKNESS SYMPTOMS IN PREGNANT WOMEN.**

**FACT**

Smoking marijuana during pregnancy increases problems with neurological development in newborns, especially in motivation, learning, memory, and movement. *(Madras, 2016)* THC exposure in utero compromises brain function and IQ in young children.

Marijuana use among MEN may double the risk of partner miscarriage—regardless of the woman’s use. *(McAlpine, 2019)*

