

# Marijuana legalization

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It causes health problems, is illegal in all but eighteen states, and has an innumerable amount of advocates trying to keep this plant-based drug out of our society.

Why would anyone in their right mind consider legalization? Marijuana is a stimulant of the cannabis family that humans have cultivated and consumed since nearly the beginning of recorded history. It can be both consumed or smoked and is most abundantly used as a mood enhancer in today's culture, altering your disposition and being used in therapeutic methods. With effects that so many people crave and acquire, how could there be any harm in this plant? The Federal Bureau of Investigation's annual Uniform Crime Report stated that police prosecuted over eight hundred thousand people for marijuana violations in 2009 (possessing it illegally), and that approximately half of all drug arrests reported in the United States are marijuana arrests ("Drugfacts: Marijuana"). If so many people are being arrested for this substance, why do they keep coming back for more? Lacking physically addictive properties like stronger remedial drugs such as morphine and oxycontin, marijuana can be used as a source of euphoria along with as painkillers as well. On the downside that most frequent "herb" or "ganja" users don't acknowledge is that marijuana can also cause problems similar to those of a smoker, along with controversial affects to your brain and other health problems to be discussed.

To start off, recognizing the benefits and positive recreational uses of this substance is a must to fully understand the controversy of this long living and recently aroused issue. It also helps to take note of how marijuana affects the brain. Marijuana attacks the central nervous system and

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interferes with the normal communication of the brain's neurons, which causes them to alter their initial behavior. Cannabinoids are an active ingredient in marijuana, and the biggest of this group is referred to as tetrahydrocannabinol, or THC. These all affect the brain receptors which “control memory, thought, concentration, time and depth, and coordinated movement.

THC also affects the production, release or re-uptake (a regulating mechanism) of various neurotransmitters,” (“ Marijuana”). Marijuana is a stimulant, which translates to providing a high without the crash. This seems a bit odd considering there are some legal depressants, take alcohol for example, that starts you off with a high but end with a crash after the temporary joy it gives you. Marijuana has minimal after affects, especially compared to alcohol, yet it is still illegal. This drug has many medical uses as well. It is frequently beneficial to the treatment of AIDS, cancer, glaucoma, multiple sclerosis, and chronic pain.

For patients who have problems with their eating, marijuana had been proved effective to help increase their appetite, a very helpful solution to people with problems such as debilitating diseases such as AIDS-related wasting syndrome. Early on, marijuana had been deemed effective for treating patients with problems like nausea from cancer chemotherapy treatments. Analgesia, or pain relief, is a huge source of the use of medical marijuana, since it can greatly help to ease discomforts that tend to come with certain side effects of cancer (Deem). Marijuana can also help in the everyday health world, not just with medical cases. The seeds and stalk from the plant contain no psychoactives and can safely and without side affects <https://assignbuster.com/marijuana-legalization/>

be baked into breads, butters, and salad dressings (Armentano). Their high levels of healthy amino acids and essential fatty acids, otherwise popularly just taken by pill supplements, can be very beneficial to the body and these vitamins being consumed is a common recommendation by doctors and health experts.

In addition to the seeds, the stalk of the plant has a very high fiber content; a renewable resource that has proved to be useful in necessities such as paper, rope, and clothing. Using this part of the plant is actually legal in most industrialized nations; however it was banned from the United States after the downfall of World War II (Edelman). Legalizing could open up many new benefits to our country both medically and emotionally. Even though there are various rationales to support the idea that the marijuana plant proves useful, there are even grander surpluses of negative reasons that come along with the drug, and legalizing wouldn't help, especially when it comes to the brain. If a marijuana user consumes too much cannabis at one time, he or she may experience a mix of unpleasant physical and psychological feelings, such as a tachycardia (rapid heart beat), dry mouth, and a growing sense of fear (Doheny).

Even though these feelings are only temporary and will not affect the user's long-term health, the momentary outcomes have the potential of causing disturbances to the consumer's daily life. Short-term memory loss is one issue that comes up very frequently with people who use marijuana. The THC will alter the way information is processed in the hippocampus (part of your brain associated with memory and learning) and will damage the brain, weakening its ability to interpret information and making it much harder to

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register new information. This creates a loss of nerve cells and spoils the memory. THC also affects the brain's limbic system, which correlates to the person's emotions.

The marijuana user's emotion becomes inconsistent and sometimes out of control, ranging from unrestrained laughter to paranoia. Some studies showed that excessive marijuana use could cause increased heart rate, gross motor disturbances, and can lead to panic attacks (Hollen). There are also many societal issues that would come with legalizing this plant. With nearly 17 million 12 year-old and older teenagers reporting using the drug within the time frame of one month and 374, 000 people entering an emergency room annually with a primary marijuana problem in 2009 alone (keeping in note that the drug is illegal), legalizing the drug would not lower these rates. The Obama Administration has worked with the Office of National Drug Control Policy to “reduce the use of marijuana and other illicit drugs through development strategies that fully integrate the principles of prevention, treatment, recovery, and effective supply reduction efforts,” (Marijuana Legalization).

They have already managed to decrease the rates of teens smoking marijuana by 3. 2% in the last decade. This provides the point that proposing such things as legalizing marijuana would deem this public health and safety approach inconsistent, dangerously causing Americans to not take it as seriously as they should be. Another concern that would come with the corroboration is the unsolved and potentially increasing risk of drug cartels. If legalization did occur, there wouldn't be an availability of the drug without

high taxes. This would cause violent drug gangs to simply undercut legal prices to keep their market share.

With increased demand for marijuana due to a new legalization policy, these brutal unions would only grow stronger (Guither). Even though the plant possesses many benefits to its use, there are a multitude of setbacks as well that altogether deduces that marijuana should be illegal due to its damaging and unhealthy effects on health. While there are medical advantages, emotional positives, and practical common uses that the drug provides, there are an outnumbering amount of reasons to not legalize the drugs.

From altering your brain state to the point where it doesn't function properly to increasing taxes that spark a whole new whirlwind of issues, the negatives outnumber the positives in this issue of justification. The Obama Administration is presently working to their potential to reduce the usage of marijuana and educate youth on the negative effects, and the absence of legalization will keep our country on the right path to triumph.