

Essay as a consequence, traces of the can



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Essay Question: Outline the use of marijuana and identify the acute and chronic harmful biological and psychological effects of marijuana on individuals. The use of marijuana is widespread by all classes, races, and cultures. Marijuana has been used for a multitude of purposes over thousands of years, and is still, today, is being used for many of the same purposes. (Hawks 1982) It is some of the possible outcomes of the usage of marijuana, and a brief history of marijuana that will be discussed in this paper. The outcomes associated with the use and abuse of marijuana is the major focus of this paper, and will be discussed and will be divided up in two groups. These groups include Medicinal/therapeutic users, and recreational users.

Recreational users will then be divided into 2 groups; acute (experimental) users, and chronic (habitual) users. The topic of marijuana use is very broad and has an intricate effect on society as a whole, however, for the purpose of this paper, the literature review is based on a very narrow fraction of the topic of marijuana, namely, the harmful biological and psychological effects of the drug. Marijuana is a naturally occurring plant with several species. Cannabis indica and cannabis sativa are the two most common types of marijuana in the developed world. These two species can be prepared for the use of people in a number of ways. The plant may be dried and used for intoxication, or as resin can be collected from the plant by compressing the plant into a brick. Also by drying the plant and boiling it in alcohol and filtering the matter to make hash oil is a way of preparing the plant for human consumption. The potency of the marijuana substances depends on the climatic conditions, soil nutrients of the environment in which the plant is

grown (Listin 1998)(Marijuana can be administered in many ways (Hawks 1982).

These ways include inhaling the fumes by smoking the plant, or by eating the plant baked into biscuits. The levels of Delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the active chemical in marijuana consumed from the different methods of administering varies, and hence, so does the effect of the administered amount. THC is lipid soluble and is stored readily in fatty tissues in the body.

As a consequence, traces of THC can be detected in the urine up to 2 – 3 months after marijuana use. The reason for the extended period of time that THC stays in the body is that unlike alcohol, which is excreted through the kidneys, THC very slowly seeps out of the fat cells. Therefore, a trace of THC in the urine of a person is not necessarily an indication of recent marijuana use (Hall, Solowij and Lemon 1994).

Medical/therapeutic use of marijuana is largely concealed because of the known fact that marijuana is an illegal drug in Australia and most countries. However, history shows that marijuana has been used for medicinal purposes for over 3000 years. Medical uses of marijuana include pain management, as an antispasmodic, as an antiemetic and for constipation, and epilepsy. (Mathre 1997)The recreational use of marijuana is one area where harmful biological and psychological effects occur. Recreational can be divided into the 2 above-mentioned groups; experimental and habitual. According to the National Drug Strategy (1994) experimental use of

marijuana is statistically the most prevalent in Australia, with an estimate of 80% of marijuana users being experimental users.

Regular users of marijuana are those who use marijuana on a weekly basis, the prevalence of regular users is 15% of users in Australia. Chronic habitual users are those users who have used marijuana on a daily basis for a number of years. Prevalence of habitual users is 5% of the total amount of marijuana smokers in Australia. The main focus of this paper is on the 2 last mentioned groups classified as 'chronic' users. The effect of marijuana is varied from individual to individual. This is because of the variables in route of administration, the mood of the user, the environment in which marijuana is smoked, the amount smoked, the body's ability to absorb, previous use, and the potency of the drug (U. S.

Department of Health and Human Services 1995). The human body has