

## CIGARETTE

## MARIJUANA

**FICTION:** Marijuana is used medically in some places so it must be safe. Marijuana is safer than cigarettes.

**FACT:** Marijuana is medically recognized in some areas, but it is for people with extreme conditions like cancer, HIV and constant pain. It is a federal government Schedule I drug and is illegal in any form.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ A chemical similar to rocket fuel helps keep the tip of a cigarette burning at an extremely hot temperature. This allows nicotine to vaporize so your lungs absorb it easier.
- ▶ Ammonia is added to cigarettes to make nicotine vaporize and increases your nicotine intake.

### RISKS

Smoking can affect nearly every organ of your body.

Not only is nicotine dangerous and addictive, but many of the chemicals in tobacco (ingredients below) are known carcinogens (cancer-causing poisons).

Chewing or sniffing tobacco is just as dangerous as smoking and has a high risk of addiction. Prolonged use of smokeless tobacco leads to a high risk of cancers of the mouth.

### LONG TERM EFFECTS

Pneumonia, chronic bronchitis, emphysema (incurable lung disease), coronary disease (heart attacks) and vascular disease which causes incurable ulcers.

### INGREDIENTS

There are more than 4,000 ingredients in a cigarette in addition to tobacco. Here are some ingredients and what they are for/in:

- ammonia—found in household cleaners
- arsenic benzene—in rat poison
- butane—gas in lighter fluid
- cadmium—found in batteries
- carbon monoxide—poisonous gas
- cyanide—deadly poison
- DDT—banned pesticide
- ethyl furoate—causes liver damage in animals
- formaldehydemethoprene—preserves dead bodies
- lead—poisonous in high doses
- methyl isocyanate—accidental release killed 2000 in India
- naphthalene—found in mothballs
- polonium—cancer-causing radioactive element

- ▶ Marijuana smoke contains 50-70 percent more carcinogenic (cancer causing) hydrocarbons (often in petroleum, natural gas and coal) than tobacco smoke.
- ▶ One marijuana joint has the same effect on the lungs as smoking up to five cigarettes in a row.
- ▶ In 1970 marijuana contained 1-4% THC.
- ▶ Today's marijuana contains 40+% THC.

### RISKS

Marijuana increases heart rate by 20-100 percent shortly after smoking; this effect can last up to three hours.

Marijuana users usually inhale more deeply and hold their breath longer than tobacco smokers, which further increase the lungs' exposure to carcinogenic smoke. It can also cause frequent respiratory infections, anxiety and panic attacks.

Marijuana distorts perceptions, impairs coordination, creates difficulty with thinking and problem solving and causes problems with learning and memory. It impairs attention and coordination and affects the way the mind processes information.

People who smoke marijuana often may have the same problems as tobacco smokers including cough, phlegm, chronic bronchitis and frequent chest colds. Also, because marijuana contains toxins and carcinogens, smokers increase their risk of cancer of the head, neck, lungs and respiratory tracts.

### LONG TERM EFFECTS

When your body is still growing, marijuana can have a long-lasting, negative impact on a developing brain. This can result in deficits of the brain, which can cause reduced verbal and communication skills, lower learning ability and a shorter attention span.

### INGREDIENTS

The main active chemical is THC (tetrahydrocannabinol). THC moves quickly through the bloodstream to the brain and other organs throughout the body. THC is a mild hallucinogen that can also act as a depressant or a stimulant.