

Tobacco and Marijuana

Tobacco Is A Drug: When people use tobacco, their bodies and minds feel different. Because tobacco causes these effects, it is considered to be a drug. The substances in tobacco that make it so dangerous are:

- **Nicotine** is the addictive drug in tobacco. As the body grows tolerant to the drug's presence, a person feels uncomfortable without the drug.
- **Carbon Monoxide** is the colorless, odorless gas found in cigarette smoke that blocks the oxygen from getting into the bloodstream.
- **Tar** is a black, sticky substance found in tobacco that coats the lungs. Tar can keep the body from filtering out harmful particles in air.

Some **short-term effects** of tobacco on your body are:

- Bad odor on hair and clothes
- Bad breath and dulled taste buds
- Yellowing teeth
- Wrinkled skin
- Shortness of breath

Long-term effects of tobacco on the body are:

- **Emphysema** is a disease in which the lungs get so damaged that they cannot absorb enough oxygen.
- **Cancer** can be caused by smoking tobacco. Smokeless tobacco can lead to cancer of the mouth, throat, or stomach.

Even if you are not the one smoking, you can have the same issues as smokers because of the smoke around you because you are breathing in secondhand smoke.

What Are Some Things You Can Do If You Want To Quit Smoking?

- Decide that you can quit.
- Get started.
- Change the habits that cause you to want to smoke.
- Set short-term goals.
- Get support from the people around you.

E-Cigarettes are battery operated devices designed to look like regular tobacco cigarettes. E-cigarettes contain liquid nicotine. E-cigs are currently unregulated, meaning there is no law forcing manufacturers to disclose what other chemicals you are actually inhaling. Liquid nicotine is the most potent form of nicotine and can be lethal if ingested. Young people are attempting to bypass the vapor and drink the liquid nicotine with deadly consequences. Because we still do not know the long-term effects of e-cigs, we cannot determine how they will affect our health.

Marijuana

Marijuana is a shredded green-brown mix of dried flowers, stems and leaves from the plant *Cannabis sativa*. Marijuana is usually rolled and smoked like a cigarette (joints or doobies), or put in hollowed-out cigars (blunts), pipes (bowls), or water pipes (bongs). Some people mix it into food or brew it as a tea. Marijuana is also known as Cannabis, Ganja, Grass, Hash, Herb, Pot, and Weed. The main active chemical in marijuana is **delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol**, or THC. When someone smokes marijuana, THC goes from the lungs into the bloodstream. From there it ends up in the brain and other organs. THC is a psychoactive or mind-changing drug. The more THC that is contained in marijuana, the stronger the high and the longer the effects last. Marijuana reactions can vary. Some people may have little reaction such as an upset stomach. Others may even become scared of the feelings that marijuana causes. Marijuana alters your decision-making process by lowering your inhibitions and perceptions of consequences of risky behaviors. Other **short-term effects** include:

- loss of coordination.
- distorted perception.
- an increase in appetite.
- a feeling of lightheadedness.

Using marijuana frequently can double the risk of depression and anxiety in some teens. Other **long-term effects** include permanent changes in the brain including memory issues, fertility issues, respiratory problems and immune system problems.

