CANNABIS SATIVA


MARIJUANA PLANT

This is the botanical name for the plant from which marijuana is derived. Pot, grass, reefer and Mary Jane are some of the nicknames given to marijuana. At least 60 psychoactive ingredients have been identified in the cannabis plant, the strongest being THC (delta - 9 - tetrahydrocannabinol). Today's marijuana is up to 20 times stronger than the drug used 30 years ago. Hashish, dried resin from the leaves and flowers of the plant, is exceptionally powerful. Sinsemilla (seedless marijuana) has been cultivated like hybrids and is usually the preferred variety of pot.

Marijuana contains more cancer-producing substances than cigarettes. It has been estimated that one joint is equivalent to a pack of cigarettes. Marijuana is fat-loving, with 400 chemicals remaining in the body as long as six weeks, and even longer in the brain, which is fat soluble. Smoking one joint a week means the body is never free of marijuana.
Visual perception, coordination and reaction time are seriously impaired, which accounts for many traffic accidents. Combining alcohol and marijuana extends the time of the impairment. Short-term memory loss interferes with normal learning. The body's immune system is weakened by marijuana use.



Marijuana interferes with reproductive health and fertility. Normal cell division may be altered, and the damaged or changed genes can be transmitted to future generations. Marijuana use by pregnant women is associated with premature birth, low birth weight, and possible learning and emotional problems. Marijuana can be passed through breast milk to the baby.

Marijuana is the fourth most widely used drug in the world today - after caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol. It is a gateway drug, one of the three easily obtainable drugs (alcohol and tobacco being the other two) that represent a user's first drug experience and leads to more drug involvement.

The America Medical Association has been joined by the American Cancer Society and several other prominent health groups that all state that marijuana has not been shown to be safe or effective as a medicine.

The Drug Policy Foundation is the latest group formed to advocate legalizing marijuana. The main rationale they offer for legalizing marijuana is for medical purposes. They are

being successful in getting manufacturers of sporting shoes and clothing to use hemp in some of their products. All these efforts are smoke-screens for their real objective, which is to make marijuana use legal.