

## Marijuana:

### What is Marijuana?

- Marijuana is a mixture of dried flowers and leaves of the cannabis plant. It contains a psychoactive compound, such as Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC).<sup>1</sup>

### Why is it Used?

- Marijuana is often used for recreation, socializing and generally better quality of life.
- The use of marijuana includes pleasurable effects such as feeling happy, relaxed and more concentrated.
- Cannabis is used to treat many medical conditions and symptoms.
  - It has been effective in treating loss of appetite, pain, anxiety, insomnia, inflammation, muscle spasms, arthritis, cancer, HIV/AIDS, multiple sclerosis, epilepsy, Parkinson's disease, ADHD, and post-traumatic stress disorder, which are just a few of the things cannabis is used to treat.<sup>2</sup>

### How is it Ingested?

- There are many ways that marijuana can be consumed.
  - It can be inhaled through smoking, which results in fastest effects.
  - Marijuana can be eaten through forms of edibles, tinctures, capsules or oils.
  - Topicals are another way marijuana can be absorbed into the body. These come in the form of lotions, salves and oils.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). Marijuana and public health. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/marijuana/faqs/what-is-marijuana.html>

<sup>2</sup>Mental health and substance use information you can trust. (n.d.). Why people use cannabis. Retrieved from <https://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/visions/cannabis-vol5/why-people-use-cannabis>

<sup>3</sup>We are the Drug Policy Alliance. (n.d.). How marijuana is consumed. Retrieved from <http://www.drugpolicy.org/drug-facts/10-facts-about-marijuana/how-marijuana-consumed>

<sup>4</sup>Decriminalization of cannabis: Definition, pros & cons. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://study.com/academy/lesson/decriminalization-of-cannabis-definition-pros-cons.html>

### Marijuana Decriminalization:

- Decriminalization of cannabis is removing or decreasing the criminal classification of cannabis use.
- There are pros and cons that come as a result of decriminalizing cannabis.
- Some pros that are believed to occur due to the decriminalization of cannabis are:
  - Cannabis can be used for medical research. By having cannabis decriminalized it will decrease the prison population and save the government money.
- Some people believe the negatives that may accompany the decriminalization of cannabis are:
  - Cannabis is addictive.
  - Cannabis can be harmful for your health.
  - By decriminalizing cannabis it will not decrease the amount of arrests.<sup>4</sup>

### Marijuana Quasi-legalization:

- The Netherlands currently operates under a quasi-legal system with regard to enforcing marijuana.
- According to the current tolerance policy, personal use of less than 5 grams and cultivation of 5 plants or less is not prosecuted.
- The sale of cannabis on coffee shops is tolerated, as long as the coffee shops keep to the rules given.
  - Must not cause any nuisance.
  - Are not permitted to sell hard drugs.
  - Are not permitted to sell cannabis to minors.
  - Are not permitted to advertise drugs.
  - Are not permitted to sell large quantities in a single transaction.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup>Government of the Netherlands. (n.d.). Drugs. Retrieved from <https://www.government.nl/topics/drugs> Government of the Netherlands. (n.d.). Tolerance policy regarding soft and hard drugs and coffee shops. Retrieved from <https://www.government.nl/topics/drugs/toleration-policy-regarding-soft-drugs-and-coffee-shops>

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### Marijuana Legalization:

- On October 17, 2018 the Cannabis Act came into effect. This set new framework for the controlling the production, distribution, sales and possession of cannabis in Canada.
- The purpose of the Cannabis act is to:
  - Prevent youth from accessing cannabis.
  - Displace the illegal cannabis market.
- Adults over the age of 18 are now able to:
  - Possess up to 30 grams of legal cannabis.
  - Share up to 30 grams with another adult.
  - Purchase cannabis products from a provincial or territorial retailer.
  - Grow up to four plants per residence for personal use.

Under the Cannabis Act the legal sales of edibles, cannabis extracts and cannabis topicals will be permitted no later then October 17, 2017.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Government of Canada. (2019, May 15). Cannabis in Canada. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/health/campaigns/cannabis.html>