



U.S. Department of Justice
Drug Enforcement Administration

DRUGS *f* ABUSE

2026 EDITION • A RESOURCE GUIDE



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Marijuana/Cannabis

WHAT IS MARIJUANA?

Marijuana is a mind-altering (psychoactive) drug, produced by the *Cannabis sativa* plant. Marijuana has over 480 constituents. THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) is believed to be the main ingredient that produces the psychoactive effect.

What is its origin?

Marijuana is grown in the United States, Canada, Mexico, South America, Caribbean, Africa, and Asia.

It can be cultivated in both outdoor and indoor settings.

What are common street names?

Common street names include:

- Aunt Mary, BC Bud, Blunts, Boom, Chronic, Dope, Gangster, Ganja, Grass, Hash, Herb, Hydro, Indo, Joint, Kif, Mary Jane, Mota, Pot, Reefer, Sinsemilla, Skunk, Smoke, Weed, and Yerba

What does it look like?

Marijuana is a dry, shredded green/brown mix of flowers, stems, seeds, and leaves from the *Cannabis sativa* plant. The mixture typically is green, brown, or gray in color and may resemble tobacco.

How is it used?

Marijuana is usually smoked as a cigarette (called a joint) or in a pipe or bong. It is also smoked in blunts, which are cigars that have been emptied of tobacco and refilled with marijuana, sometimes in combination with another drug. Marijuana can also be mixed in foods (edibles) or brewed as a tea.

What is its effect on the mind?

When marijuana is smoked, the active ingredient THC passes from the lungs and into the bloodstream, which carries the chemical to the organs throughout the body, including the brain. In the brain, THC connects to specific sites called cannabinoid receptors on nerve cells and influences the activity of those cells.

Many of these receptors are found in the parts of the brain that influence:

- Pleasure, memory, thought, concentration, sensory and time perception, and coordinated movement

The short-term effects of marijuana include:

- Problems with memory and learning, distorted perception, difficulty in thinking and problem-solving, and loss of coordination

The effect of marijuana on perception and coordination are responsible for serious impairments in learning, associative processes, and psychomotor behavior (driving abilities).

Long term, regular use can lead to physical dependence and withdrawal following discontinuation, as well as psychological addiction or dependence.

Clinical studies show that the physiological, psychological, and behavioral effects of marijuana vary among individuals and present a list of common responses to cannabinoids, as described in the scientific literature:

- Dizziness, nausea, tachycardia, facial flushing, dry mouth, and tremor initially
- Merriment, happiness, and even exhilaration at high doses



Marijuana Leaves

- Disinhibition, relaxation, increased sociability, and talkativeness
- Enhanced sensory perception, giving rise to increased appreciation of music, art, and touch
- Heightened imagination leading to a subjective sense of increased creativity
- Time distortions
- Illusions, delusions, and hallucinations are rare except at high doses
- Impaired judgment, reduced coordination, and ataxia, which can impede driving ability or lead to an increase in risk-taking behavior
- Emotional lability, incongruity of affect, dysphoria, disorganized thinking, inability to converse logically, agitation, paranoia, confusion, restlessness, anxiety, drowsiness, and panic attacks may occur, especially in inexperienced users or in those who have taken a large dose
- Increased appetite and short-term memory impairment are common

What is its effect on the body?

Short-term physical effects from marijuana use may include:

- Sedation, bloodshot eyes, increased heart rate, coughing from lung irritation, increased appetite, and increased blood pressure (although prolonged use may cause a decrease in blood pressure).

Marijuana smokers experience serious health problems such as bronchitis, emphysema, and bronchial asthma. Extended use may cause suppression of the immune system. Withdrawal from chronic use of high doses of marijuana causes physical signs including headache, shakiness, sweating, and stomach pains and nausea.

Withdrawal symptoms also include behavioral signs such as:

- Restlessness, irritability, sleep difficulties, and decreased appetite

What are its overdose effects?

No deaths from overdose of marijuana have been reported. Although, there have been an increasing number of emergency room visits involving marijuana edibles.

Which drugs cause similar effects?

Hashish and hashish oil are drugs made from the cannabis plant that are like marijuana, only stronger.

Hashish (hash) consists of the THC-rich resinous material of the cannabis plant, which is collected, dried, and then compressed into a variety of forms, such as balls, cakes, or cookie-like sheets. Pieces are then broken off, placed in pipes or mixed with tobacco and placed in pipes or cigarettes, and smoked.

The main sources of hashish are the Middle East, North Africa, Pakistan, and Afghanistan.

Hashish oil (hash oil, liquid hash, cannabis oil) is produced by extracting the cannabinoids from the plant material with a solvent. The color and odor of the extract will vary, depending on the solvent used. A drop or two of this liquid on a cigarette is equal to a single marijuana joint. Like marijuana, hashish and hashish oil are both schedule I drugs.

What is its legal status in the United States?

At the time of publication of this document (September, 2026), marijuana, unless hemp, is a schedule I substance under the Controlled Substances Act, meaning that it has a high potential for abuse, no currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States, and a lack of accepted safety for use under medical supervision.

Over the last three decades, the majority of U.S. states have legalized the sale and use of marijuana for medical purposes as a matter of state law and have established systems to regulate that activity.

On April 28, 2026, the U.S. Department of Justice placed drug products containing marijuana that have been approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in schedule III of the Controlled Substances Act.

This regulation applies to marijuana as defined in the CSA, marijuana extracts, delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol and other compounds derived from the marijuana plant (other than the mature stalks and seeds) that fall outside the definition of hemp, to the extent that any of these are included in an FDA-approved drug product or are subject to a state-issued license to manufacture, distribute, and/or dispense marijuana or products containing marijuana for medical purposes (“state medical marijuana license”).

Marinol is a synthetic version of THC in a capsule (also referred to as dronabinol, the generic or International Nonproprietary Name given to THC), prescribed for the control of nausea and vomiting caused by chemotherapeutic agents used in the treatment of cancer and to stimulate appetite in AIDS patients. Marinol is a schedule III drug under the Controlled Substances Act.

Syndros is an oral dronabinol (THC) solution that is used for the treatment of anorexia associated with weight loss in patients who have failed to respond adequately to conventional antiemetic treatments. Syndros is a schedule II drug under the Controlled Substances Act.

Epidiolex is an oral solution of cannabidiol (CBD) that has no more than 0.1% THC, used to treat two epilepsy conditions, Dravet syndrome and Lennox-Gestaut syndrome. Epidiolex is excluded from control under the Controlled Substances Act by virtue of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, Public Law 115-334.

Marijuana Concentrates

WHAT ARE MARIJUANA CONCENTRATES?

A marijuana concentrate is a highly potent concentrated form of THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) that is most similar in appearance to either honey or butter, and commonly referred to or known on the street as “honey oil” or “budder.”

What is its origin?

Marijuana concentrates contain extraordinarily high THC levels that could range from 40 to 80 percent. This form of marijuana can be up to four times higher in THC content than high grade or top shelf marijuana, which normally measures around 20 percent THC levels.

Many methods are used to convert or “manufacture” marijuana into marijuana concentrates. One method is the butane extraction process. This process is particularly dangerous because it uses highly flammable butane to extract the THC from the cannabis plant. Given the flammable nature of butane, this process has

resulted in violent explosions. THC extraction labs are being reported nationwide, particularly in the western states and in states where local and state marijuana laws are more relaxed.

What are common street names?

Common street names include:

- 710 (the word “OIL” flipped and spelled backward), wax, ear wax, honey oil, budder, butane hash oil, butane honey oil (BHO), shatter, dabs (dabbing), black glass, and errl.

What does it look like?

Marijuana concentrates are similar in appearance to honey or butter and are either brown or gold in color.

How is it used?

Marijuana concentrates can be mixed with various food or drink products to be consumed orally; however, smoking remains the most popular route of administration by use of water or oil pipes. A disturbing aspect of this emerging threat is the inhalation of concentrates via electronic cigarettes (also known as e-cigarettes) or vaporizers. Many marijuana concentrate users prefer the e-cigarette/vaporizer because it is smokeless, sometimes odorless, and easy to hide or conceal. The user takes a small amount of marijuana concentrate, referred to as a “dab,” then heats the substance using the e-cigarette/vaporizer producing vapors that ensures an instant “high” effect upon the user. Using an e-cigarette/vaporizer to inhale marijuana concentrates is commonly referred to as “dabbing” or “vaping.”



*Marijuana concentrate
Image by Erik Fenderson*

Vaping

What is Vaping?

Vaping is the act of inhaling and exhaling an aerosol or vapor made from a liquid or dry material that is heated in an electronic powered device, called an electronic cigarette, or e-cigarette. The liquid can contain flavoring, nicotine, or marijuana concentrates. Dry herb vape devices can heat dry marijuana without combusting it and without using additional liquid. Generally, the vaping device consists of a battery, a cartridge for containing the e-liquid or dry marijuana, and a heating component. Vaping devices come in a variety of shapes and sizes, with some resembling USB flash drives, pens, or other everyday objects that are often difficult for parents and teachers to recognize.

What are common street names?

- Common street names include: E-cigs, e-hookahs, mods, vape pens, vapes, tank systems, and Juuls or Juuling (after the Juul brand of vaping devices).

What are the effects of vaping?

Vaping is not considered safe, especially for teens and young adults, since the adolescent brain is still developing and inhaling any substance through these devices may be harmful. Additionally, some devices might explode, resulting in burns and other injuries. Most vaping devices contain and release a number of potentially toxic substances including metals and volatile organic compounds from the devices and solvents used. Some of these have been linked to cell and DNA damage. Inhaling the heated air and contents has been shown to burn lung tissue.



Source: National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2018. *Public Health Consequences of E-Cigarettes*.

What are the Effects of Using Marijuana Concentrates?

Being a highly concentrated form of marijuana, the effects upon the person may be more psychologically and physically intense than plant marijuana use. To date, long term effects of marijuana concentrate use are not yet fully known; but the effects of marijuana use are known.

These effects include:

- Paranoia, anxiety, panic attacks, and hallucinations. Additionally, the use of plant marijuana increases one's heart rate and blood pressure, although prolonged use can produce hypotension. Plant marijuana users may also experience withdrawal and addiction problems.

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Modern vaping devices