



CANNABIS

Did you know?

Cannabis is considered a hallucinogen and distorts the user's perception of reality. The THC-content of Cannabis is a psycho-active ingredient. Due to changes in production and growth the strength of Cannabis increased between 20 - 25% which may make it more dangerous for some people to use.

Signs of use

Users respond in different ways to the different strains of Cannabis. For some it has a calming effect which includes deep relaxation, loss of motivation and coordination, memory loss, confusion and emotional detachment. For others it does the opposite and could include excitability, giggling, unprovoked aggression, panic, mood swings and depression. Lastly, users can experience a Cannabis induced psychosis (experiencing things that does not exist) with or without aggression. Cannabis users often have red rims around their eyes and dry red eyes. A smoky, sweetish smell on the person and clothing can also signify Cannabis use.

Dangers with chronic or heavy use

THC is the psychoactive ingredient in Cannabis. It is fat-soluble and therefore accumulates in the fatty tissue of the body like the brain and sex glands. With longer term use, the brain cells can become clogged, and the user will have difficulty with short term memory, coordination and concentration. The use of Cannabis can decrease sperm production which in turn reduces fertility. Cannabis users tend to suffer the a-motivational syndrome which is characterised by apathy, lethargy and reduced ambition. Although there is an ongoing feud in the media about the addictiveness of Cannabis, some evidence suggest that a user can become both psychologically and physically addicted, although the likelihood of psychological addiction is much higher. Psychotic states and schizophrenia are common mental health risks of long term use of the drug.

What it's like to be high

Cannabis creates a feeling of light-headedness, relaxation, talkativeness, euphoria, increased appetite and feelings of detachment from reality. The user can also feel a heightened awareness of all the senses.

Street names

Bhang, black, blast, blow, blunts, bob hope, bush, chronic, drop, dagga, draw, ganja, grass, hash, hashish, hemp, herb, marijuana, pot, puff, lights, resin, sensi, sensemilla, skunk, smoke, backy, weed, zero. Some names are derived from where the Cannabis is grown: Afghan, home-grown, Moroccan, Durban Poison, Swazi, etc.

Paraphernalia (Drug using tools)

- Unsmoked or broken-off cigarettes filters.
- Loose pips (dagga seeds).
- Broken-off bottle-necks.
- See-through plastic money bags (bankies).
- Leaves - dry or fresh.
- Bottles of eye drops.

Withdrawal symptoms

One person may be able to use dagga for an extended period without becoming dysfunctional. For many however the opposite is true, and Cannabis starts a slippery slope into a life of addiction. When a person stops using dagga, it may take a while before any withdrawal symptoms set in, giving the impression that the user suffers no withdrawal. Cannabis can still be detected with a drug test for up to 30 days after the last use. Possible withdrawal symptoms include: irritability, hostility, restlessness, anxiety, insomnia, trembling, sweating and diarrhoea.

Treatment

There is always hope if you struggle with addiction.

Please contact Elim Clinic on 011 975 2951 or on marketing@elimclin.co.za to find out more about treatment. You can also visit our website on www.elimclin.co.za for more information.



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