

# MARIJUANA

## Natural, but not harmless.

- Marijuana use contributes to health problems
- It is four times stronger than in the 1980s
- Risky no matter method of use, including smoking, vaporizing, and edibles (food containing marijuana)
- Heavy use in young adults can cause lasting damage to the brain and decrease intelligence
- Marijuana can directly worsen symptoms of anxiety, depression, and schizophrenia

## Marijuana can be addictive.

- Marijuana use can lead to addiction, just like with other drugs
- 4.5 million people in the U.S. are addicted
- Chances of addiction are increased:
  - 17% of adolescents who use will become addicted
  - 25-50% of people who use everyday will become addicted
- Withdrawal symptoms include cravings, trouble sleeping, anxiety, appetite loss

## Marijuana use impairs driving.

- Doubles a driver's risk of an accident
- Use with alcohol increases risk

## Tips for Cutting Back

### Think about changing.

- Why do you use? What do you like about it?
- Why do you want to cut down or stop?

### Plan for the change you want.

- Set a goal and date for changing your use. Make it realistic.
- Share your plan with people you trust and ask for support.

### Act on your decision.

- *Distract and do something.* Make a list of fun activities unrelated to your use and keep busy.
- *Delay.* Stop and think before using. Wait 15 minutes to ride the craving, and the wave of desire may pass.
- *Plan ahead.* Avoid high-risk situations and people who use.

### Have a back-up plan.

- If you haven't achieved your goal yet, that's okay.
- Consider the situation in which you used and see what could be changed next time.
- Review your plan and see if it needs revising.

## Legal does not mean safer.

- Marijuana is not FDA-approved
- There may be some chemicals in marijuana that help a range of illnesses or symptoms
- Lack of clinical evidence supporting benefits
- Benefits do not outweigh health risks

## Marijuana and pregnancy.

- Marijuana use during pregnancy affects child development
- Health risks for the child include low birth weight; premature birth; problems with attention, memory, and problem solving; and reduced IQ

## Using marijuana with other substances.

- Mixing marijuana and alcohol increases risk for nausea and reactions of panic, anxiety, or paranoia
- Mixing tobacco and marijuana increases risk of developing respiratory diseases and/or cancer

## Helpful Links:

<http://easyread.drugabuse.gov/marijuana-effects.php>  
<http://www.drugfree.org/drug-guide/marijuana>

## Relaxation Alternatives:

Everyday Tai Chi:

<http://www.everyday-taichi.com/index.html>

3-Minute Breathing Space: <http://umurl.us/GUi>

Breathing and Relaxation Exercise:

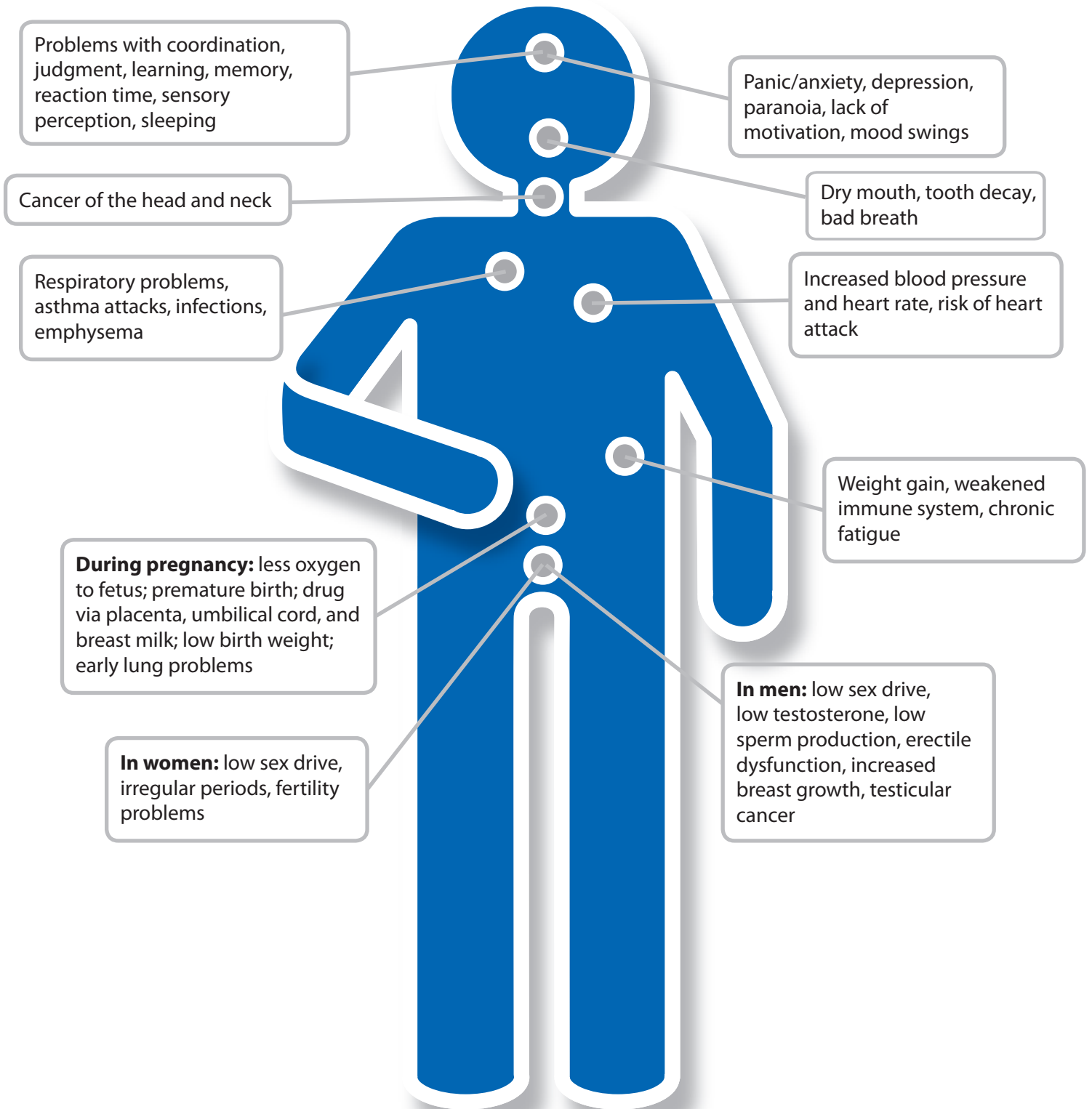
<http://umurl.us/AMF>

Body Scan Meditation: <http://umurl.us/B0dyScan>

Sources: BNI-ART Institute; National Institute on Drug Abuse, <http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/infofacts/marijuana>; National Alliance on Mental Illness, [http://www.nami.org/Content/NavigationMenu/Hearts\\_and\\_Minds/Smoking\\_Cessation/Marijuana\\_and\\_Mental\\_Illness.htm](http://www.nami.org/Content/NavigationMenu/Hearts_and_Minds/Smoking_Cessation/Marijuana_and_Mental_Illness.htm); University of Washington Alcohol & Drug Abuse Institute, <http://learnaboutmarijuanawa.org/factsheets/tobacco.htm>; Mixing Cannabis and Alcohol, <http://ncpic.org.au/ncpic/publications/factsheets/article/mixing-cannabis-and-alcohol>; A Guide to Cutting Down and Stopping Cannabis Use, <http://www.knowcannabis.org.uk/images/KClargeguide.pdf>

# MARIJUANA

## Effects on the Body



Mid-America (HHS Region 7)

**ATTC**

Addiction Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration



Visit [www.sbirt.care](http://www.sbirt.care) for more resources!

This work is supported by grants T1025355, T1026442, and T1024226 from the Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.