

NOT USED AS INTENDED

Vaping Marijuana

Pot smokers have gotten more creative with the electronic cigarette. Since cannabis can come in a wax or liquid form, it's more difficult just by looking at the e-cigarette whether or not the user is vaping marijuana or just the e-cig cartridges. The almost odorless vapor also makes it harder to detect. The trend is rapidly growing among teenagers. At a study done at Yale University, over 3,800 high school students across five Connecticut high schools were surveyed by researchers. Approximately 30% (or 1,140 individuals) admitted to trying marijuana, but just under 19% (or 722 students) used an e-cigarette to smoke the cannabis. If that's just in five high schools in one state, just think of how many people are vaping marijuana throughout the entire country!

The scary part about this trend is that this form of marijuana is much stronger than the regular, dried marijuana plant. Wax or liquid cannabis contains between 50-90% THC—the drug's main mind-altering chemical, whereas the amount in dried marijuana is much less. Here are a few of the unpleasant side effects that are magnified when vaping marijuana:

- Memory loss and trouble concentrating
- Panic attacks
- Paranoia
- Trouble sleeping
- Increased risk of several types of cancer
- Weakened immune system
- Greater risk of having unprotected sex
- Increased heart rate

FALSE ADVERTISEMENT

The makers of e-cigarettes and other vape pens originally claimed to help users quit smoking, but the truth is that they are attracting more young people to start. They're marketed towards teens and young adults, rather than older adults who may have previously been smoking for longer. Many teens think using e-cigarettes makes them look cool and sophisticated, but the truth is they're just putting themselves at risk.



THE TRUTH ABOUT GETTING HIGH WITH E-CIGARETTES

Test your knowledge of e-cigarettes and marijuana by answering the following True or False questions.

1. It's easy to tell when someone is vaping marijuana because the smell is just as strong as when they smoke it.
a. True b. False
2. Wax or liquid marijuana has the same percentage of THC as dried marijuana.
a. True b. False
3. E-cigarettes are easy to buy.
a. True b. False
4. There's no flame in an e-cig.
a. True b. False
5. Marijuana use can alter brain development, especially if a person starts using while they're still young.
a. True b. False

VAPING MARIJUANA



Answers: 1.B 2.B 3.A 4.A 5.A

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NOT SO SAFE TO VAPE

WAIT...AREN'T E-CIGARETTES FOR TOBACCO?

You're out with your friends when one of them pulls out this strange, barrel-shaped object. It looks almost like an ink pen, but then he starts smoking it. You're curious, so you ask him what it's all about. He tells you that it's an e-cig and that it gives you the same buzz that cigarettes give you, and you can get them from online or even stores. His favorite thing to do, however, is to put marijuana in it. He pulls out some from a little bag in his pocket and says, "You definitely have to try this. It's better for you because it's vapor, not smoke." He offers it to you, so you try it. Big mistake!

Electronic cigarettes, more commonly known as e-cigs or e-cigarettes, are battery operated devices that are designed to look and feel like an everyday cigarette. The majority of these devices use refillable cartridges, called e-liquids, which are filled with flavors and dangerous chemicals. There's a growing trend, though, with teens using e-cigarettes to smoke marijuana.

Many people mistakenly believe that e-cigarettes are safer than regular cigarettes because you're not inhaling any smoke from the burned tobacco or marijuana (as is the case with the traditional cigarette or blunt). You still, however, are exposing yourself to the same chemicals that are found in marijuana when smoked in joint.

HOW DO THEY WORK?

E-cigs are meant to resemble regular cigarettes, but they also have some brands that look like pipes. The main difference between a regular cigarette or a joint and an e-cig is that you don't need a flame to start smoking an e-cig. E-cigarettes are powered by battery and contain a vaporization chamber and a cartridge. The user inhales just like they would a regular cigarette, and the vaporization chamber heats the liquid nicotine or marijuana wax, which changes into a flavored vapor.



NOT SO SAFE

5 Things You Need to Know about E-Cigarettes and Marijuana

Using marijuana with electronic cigarettes is said to be a cleaner, healthier option to traditional marijuana, but is this really the case? Here are some important things to know about vaping marijuana.

1. Parents and teachers should be hyperaware to what teens are smoking. The smell of vaping marijuana isn't as strong as smoking it, so it's harder to detect. The appearance of hash oil and e-liquids are also very similar, so it could potentially be out in plain sight.
2. Studies have shown that more and more teens are trying marijuana through vaping. Since marijuana is a gateway drug, those same teens may be more likely to try harder drugs.
3. Concentrates of marijuana that go into e-cigs contain up to 90% THC. Marijuana flowers contain approximately 20%. Since the amount of the psychoactive agent is so much higher in an e-cig, many people report having terrible side effects like passing out, extreme paranoia, and nerve-racking anxiety.
4. Marijuana is addictive, even when it's being vaped. With a higher potency in the e-cig, users are even more likely to become addicted to cannabis.
5. Heavy marijuana use as a teenager can affect the way your brain works. Humans' brains are constantly developing, up until mid-20s. High-potency marijuana use through vaping has shown to result in poor memories and brain abnormalities in adults who started heavy marijuana use as teenagers.



GABE'S STORY

Gabe was a good kid who did okay in school and never got into trouble. His parents and teachers had warned him since he was young about the dangers of smoking, and to be honest, he just wasn't interested in ever trying cigarettes because he hated the smell. One night, he went out with some friends to go see a movie, and his friend Natalie pulled out a strange metal pen. "Woah, are you smoking in here?" he asked, alarmed as he saw what looked like smoke coming from it. "No," she laughed. "I'm vaping marijuana. Want a hit?"

At first, Gabe refused, but after some pressuring from the other kids in the group, he decided to try it. Although the high was unlike anything he ever experienced and he was actually kind of scared, he didn't want to seem like a baby in front of his friends, especially Natalie. The movie was already pretty scary, but the higher levels of THC in the hash oil made Gabe even more anxious and paranoid. As the monsters moved on the big screen, stalking their unsuspecting victims, Gabe began to hallucinate that they were all around him too. As a devilish creature began to feast on one of its victims, Gabe's heart began to pound and cold sweat ran down his face. He was having a full-blown panic attack and just couldn't calm down. Other moviegoers went to complain to the management, and Gabe and his entire group were escorted out for disrupting the theater. Finally, hours later, he was finally calm enough to realize, "I'm definitely never trying that again!"

