

3 Things You Should Know about Marijuana

Meet Jake. Jake is a 22-year-old college student that started using marijuana daily during his senior year of high school. Now, Jake is in college and is experiencing negative effects from marijuana: struggling to be present in his close relationships and dropping grades from failing to remember the material of his class lectures.



1. MARIJUANA CAN AFFECT YOUR MEMORY

Marijuana affects both your short-term and long-term memory. Its main active compound, THC, alters the brain's center of memory formation, the hippocampus. This makes it difficult to learn and retain information.

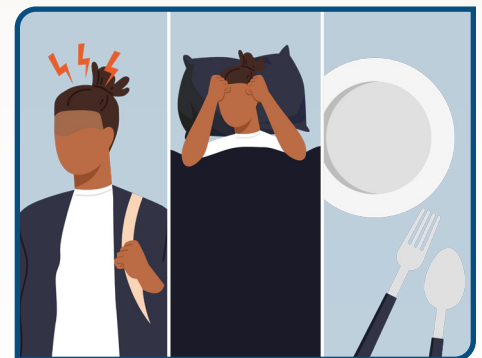


Because of his long-term use, marijuana is now part of Jake's routine, and he doesn't remember what it felt like to be without it. He now needs to use more THC to feel the same effects, and is finding that his overall anxiety and stress are continuing to increase.

2. MARIJUANA DOESN'T ALWAYS MAKE YOU FEEL RELAXED

While some people use marijuana to relax and unwind, others may experience the opposite effect, increasing anxiety, paranoia and general uneasiness. This is because THC can stimulate the "fight or flight" response.

After receiving a grade he isn't proud of, Jake decides to join his friend in visiting their parents for the weekend. A weekend away from school is exactly what Jake needs to get his mind off his grades and upcoming assignments. But while with his friend's family, he can't get his mind off marijuana. After one day without marijuana, Jake becomes irritable.



3. MARIJUANA USE CAN LEAD TO WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS

Common withdrawal symptoms include irritability, difficulty falling or staying asleep, loss of appetite and more. Withdrawal occurs when someone whose brain is dependent on marijuana tries to stop or reduce their use of it.

As a result of the withdrawal symptoms, Jake does not enjoy his weekend as much as he thought he would. He returns to school sleep-deprived and a little embarrassed. Jake realizes that the positive effects marijuana seemed to give him in high school have dwindled, and his marijuana use is burning him out. Wanting to take back more control over his mood and his school grades, Jake decides to stop using marijuana altogether.

The effects of marijuana use differ by person, with variable negative and positive effects on the body and mind.