



Cannabis (Dagga)

DESCRIPTION	Cannabis sativa is a hardy, aromatic herbaceous plant that contains at least 400 different chemicals, of which its main mind-altering ingredient is THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol). The cannabis plant is usually cut, dried, chopped, and rolled into a joint or blunts (resembling a cigarette/cigar).
MODE OF ADMINISTRATION	Cannabis is generally inhaled by smoking it. It is sometimes smoked with Mandrax. It is less frequently ingested orally (e.g., dagga cookies).
PRIMARY EFFECT	Central nervous system depressant and hallucinogen.
SHORT-TERM EFFECTS	<p>The effects from smoking are generally experienced within a few minutes and appear to peak in 10 to 30 minutes and wear off in 2 or 3 hours. The following effects are usually present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dry mouth and throat;• Increased heart rate;• Red eyes;• Distorted perceptual and sensory processes;• Impaired co-ordination and balance;• Delayed reaction time;• Loss of concentration and diminished short-term memory;• Impaired judgment;• Loss of motivation and diminished inhibitions;• Increase in appetite (“the munchies”);• Moderate doses tend to induce a sense of well-being and a dreamy state of relaxation that encourages fantasies and heightened suggestibility;• In large doses, intense and disturbing reactions including paranoia, hallucinations and psychosis.
LONG-TERM EFFECTS	<p>Heavy and continued use can lead to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Subtle loss of intellectual capacity (including deficits to attention, learning and memory capacity);• Chronic respiratory illness (including chest colds, bronchitis, emphysema and bronchial asthma);• Damage to respiratory, reproductive and immune systems;• Psychiatric complications (including depression, anxiety, panic attacks, paranoid ideation, hallucinations and psychosis);• Increased risk of lung cancer, chromosomal damage, seizures, and immune system impairment;• Risk of injury.
ADDICTION POTENTIAL	High psychological addiction potential.
TREATMENT OPTIONS	In cases of heavy and prolonged use, inpatient and/or outpatient treatment with the use of multiple therapeutic methods (individual, family and group psychotherapy) is usually necessary to achieve lasting abstinence. Co-morbid conditions are treated if required.