



What is cannabis?



What are the different forms of cannabis products?



Is cannabis harmful?



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Is cannabis addictive?

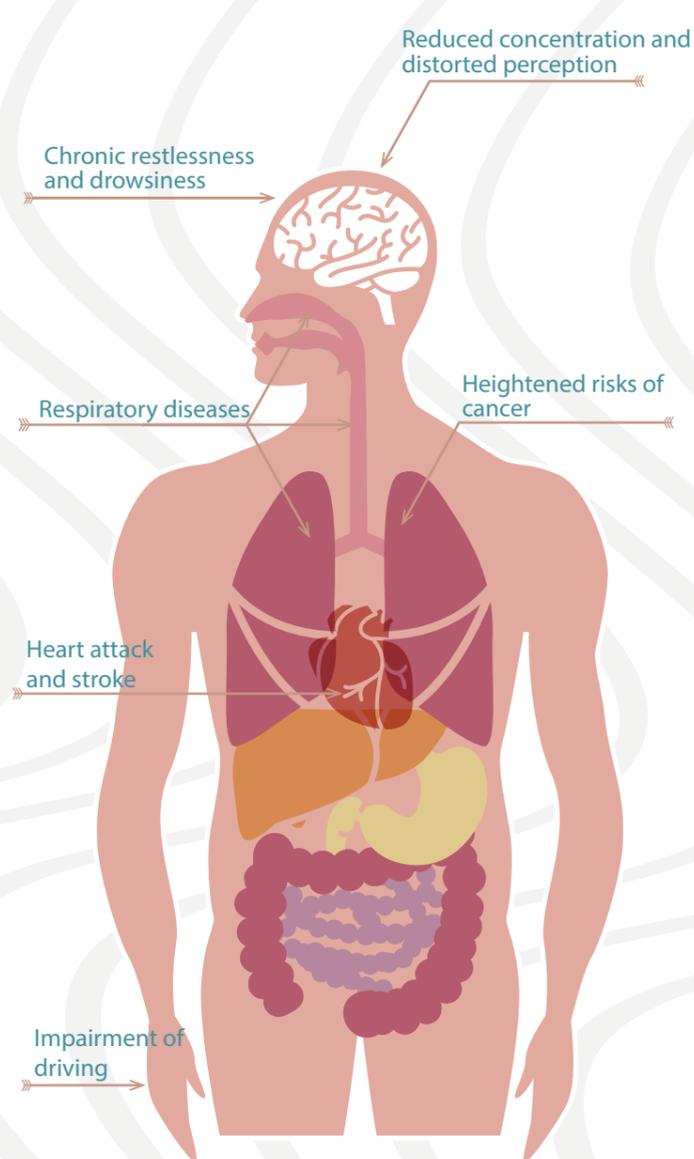
- **Cannabis is a drug.**
- Cannabis plant contains numerous types of chemical compound called "cannabinoids", e.g. THC, CBD.
- THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) is the major cannabinoid in cannabis plants causing psychoactive ("high"), harmful effects and addiction.
- In addition to cannabis plant, there are synthetic cannabinoids which are substances produced in the laboratory having similar effects to THC or other cannabinoids contained in a cannabis plant.
- Street name: "marijuana", "hash", "grass", or "weed", etc.



- Most common form: smoked in **roll-up cigarettes**
- Other forms: cannabis herbs or cannabinoids may be added to **food, drinks, topical products for applying to skin, hair or nails; cannabis extracts; cannabis resin or oil.**
- Watch out for words such as "cannabis", "canna", "marijuana", "indica", "sativa", "hemp", "THC" or the image of the cannabis plant to identify cannabis products.



- Isn't cannabis a plant and hence less harmful? Are the negative effects only short-term?
- No. Many natural plants contain **toxic or harmful ingredients**. Moreover, there are increasingly more synthetic cannabinoids with much higher potency produced in the laboratory.
- Cannabis is a drug which is addictive and can cause both short-term and long-term serious harms to health, such as –
 - Addiction
 - Hallucination
 - IQ loss
 - Anxiety
 - Depression
 - Reduced concentration and distorted perception (sights, sounds, time, touch)
 - Chronic restlessness and drowsiness
 - Heightened risks of cancer and respiratory diseases if used with tobacco
 - Heart attack and stroke in young cannabis users
 - Impairment of driving and an increased risk of road traffic injuries



- **YES**, both physiologically and psychologically.
- Abusers tend to take more cannabis, or use other illicit substances to maintain the "high" effect.



Can cannabis be used as medicine?

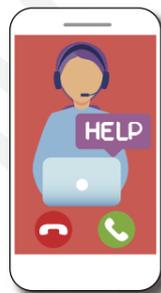
- Cannabis plant is **not medicine**.
- In Hong Kong, no registered pharmaceutical product contains cannabis or cannabinoids.
- Some researches suggest that certain cannabinoids may relieve the symptoms of a few illnesses (e.g. neuropathic pain and spasticity in multiple sclerosis, seizure in a very specific type of epilepsy, anti-emetics for cancer patients under chemotherapy).
- However, cannabinoids do not modify the underlying disease nor are they first-line treatment for any of these conditions.
- More researches are being undertaken.



**How can one seek help?
Will the case be kept confidential?**

➤ Seek help from –

- 24-hour Anti-drug Hotline: **186 186**
- WhatsApp/WeChat Help-seeking Instant Messaging: **98 186 186**



➤ Information is kept strictly confidential.



What should I do if I know someone is selling cannabis or cannabis products?

➤ Report drug crimes –

- Police drug reporting hotline: **2527 1234**
- Customs and Excise Department: **2545 6182**

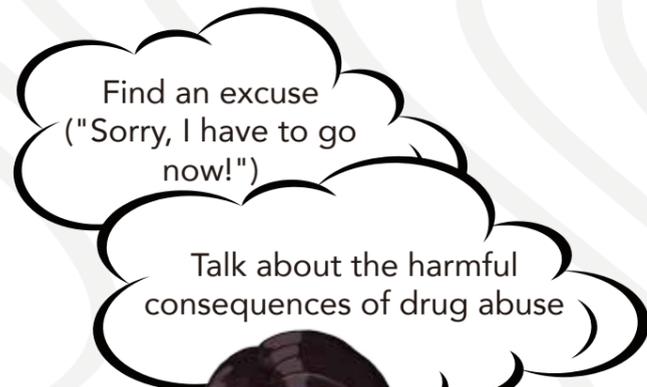
➤ For more information about cannabis, please visit our website at

www.nd.gov.hk/en/cannabis/furtherinfo_eng.htm



How to say NO to cannabis?

➤ A few tips to say **NO** to cannabis (and indeed any drugs) if you are asked to try it –



How can I tell if my friends, children or students are taking cannabis?

➤ Note the **warning signs** for cannabis use –

- Having strong smell (usually stronger than cigarette smoke)
- Staring blankly
- Giggling without reasons
- Having red, bloodshot eyes



➤ For Parents: signs that your kids may be taking cannabis –

- Change in mood
- Using incense and other deodorisers to cover strong body smell
- Staying in bathrooms for a long time
- Having drug-related items such as bong, grinder, pipes and roll papers in rooms



**What is the penalty?
Will Government legalise cannabis?**

➤ Cannabis and all products containing cannabis or controlled cannabinoids (e.g. THC) are controlled under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance (Cap. 134).

➤ **Severe** maximum penalty for trafficking and illicit consumption:

- Trafficking: Life imprisonment and \$5 million fine
- Illegal possession or consumption: 7-year imprisonment and \$1 million fine

➤ Cannabis is a drug. The United Nations requires strict control on the production, manufacture, export, import, use and possession, etc. of cannabis.

➤ With all the **harmful effects of cannabis and international regulatory requirements**, the Government **will not legalise cannabis, including the so-called "recreational" use of cannabis** (which generally refers to the non-medical use of cannabis).



**What is the penalty?
Will Government legalise cannabis?**

➤ A few overseas jurisdictions have legalised the "recreational" use of cannabis. Some justifications given by these jurisdictions include –

- generating tax revenue from legalised cannabis sale for funding government programmes
- providing for legal production of cannabis to reduce illicit cannabis activities
- reclaiming most of the cannabis trade from organised crime groups
- alleviating the court's workload arising from cannabis offences
- protecting the health of young persons by restricting their access to cannabis

➤ Points (a) to (d) above are not pertinent considerations in Hong Kong's context. In fact we consider that the claimed "benefits" cannot outweigh the harms brought to society by cannabis abuse.

➤ As regards point (e), the International Narcotics Control Board has pointed out that in reality, substantial numbers of licensed cannabis businesses are selling cannabis to young people.



Seek Help/Enquiries

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