



HEALTH IMPLICATIONS OF MARIJUANA

What are the General Health Effects?^{1,3}

Immediate Effects

The effects of marijuana use can be different for everyone. Common effects may include:

- a happy, relaxed or “high” feeling
- slower reactions and hand/eye coordination
- distorted perceptions of time and distance
- trouble thinking, learning and remembering
- anxiety, panic or paranoia
- faster heart rate
 - increased blood pressure
 - increased appetite
 - psychosis – seeing or hearing things that aren’t real (more common with higher doses of THC)

These effects typically last two to four hours after marijuana is smoked or inhaled. When marijuana is eaten, the effects take longer to start and may last four to 10 hours. Marijuana can vary in its potency, or strength, depending on the plant and extraction process.

What is THC?

Tetrahydrocannabinol, or THC, is a mind-altering compound found in marijuana.

Impairment

For occasional users, using 10 mg or more of THC is likely to cause impairment. This impacts your ability to drive, bike or perform other safety-sensitive activities.

ADDICTION

About 1 in 10 marijuana users will become addicted. For people who begin using before the age of 18, that number rises to 1 in 6.

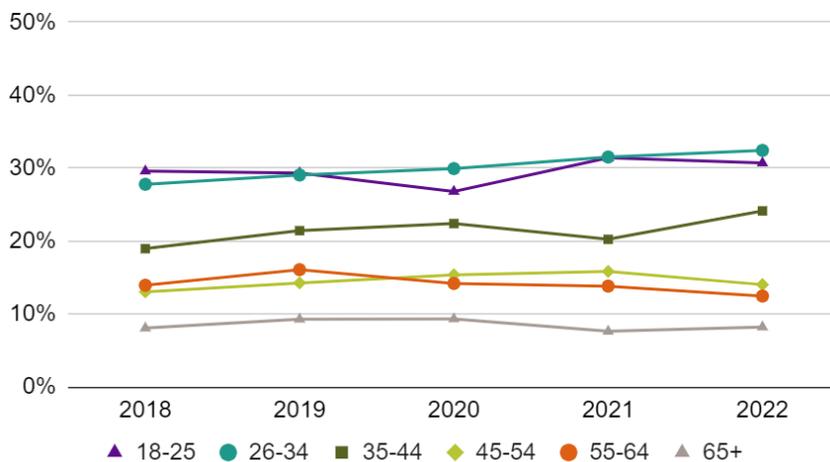
Signs that someone might be addicted include:

- Unsuccessful efforts to quit using marijuana.
- Giving up important activities with friends and family in favor of using marijuana.
- Using marijuana even when it is known that it causes problems fulfilling everyday jobs at home, school or work.

Long Term Health Effects of Marijuana on Adults

-  **Respiratory:** Marijuana smoke irritates the lungs; people who smoke marijuana daily or near-daily may have a daily cough, bronchitis, mucus and wheezing.
-  **Lung Cancer:** There is conflicting research about the relationship between smoking marijuana and lung cancer. More research is needed in this area. There is substantial evidence that daily or near-daily marijuana smoking is associated with pre-malignant lesions in the airways that may lead to cancer.
-  **Brain and Mental Health:** Daily or near daily use of marijuana can have a negative effect on a person's memory. This damage can last a week or more after the last time it was used. In addition, marijuana use in high doses can cause temporary psychosis (not knowing what is real, hallucinations and paranoia) while a person is high.
-  **Pregnancy and Breastfeeding:** THC passes through the placenta to the fetus, so the unborn child is exposed to THC if the mother uses marijuana, and THC passes through breast milk to a breastfeeding child. Marijuana use during pregnancy may be associated with an increased risk of heart defects in offspring or stillbirth. Stronger evidence was found for effects that are seen in the exposed child months or years after birth if the pregnant person used marijuana while pregnant with the child. These include decreased growth and impaired cognitive function and attention.

Across the state, the prevalence of current marijuana use is highest among younger adults.



Past 30 day use of marijuana among Colorado adults

In 2022, 43% of young adults ages 18-25 in Broomfield/Boulder counties reported using marijuana in the last 30 days, compared to 31% across the state.

In Broomfield/Boulder counties, 24% of all adults reported marijuana use in the past 30 days.



Impact of Frequent Use of Marijuana and High Concentration THC

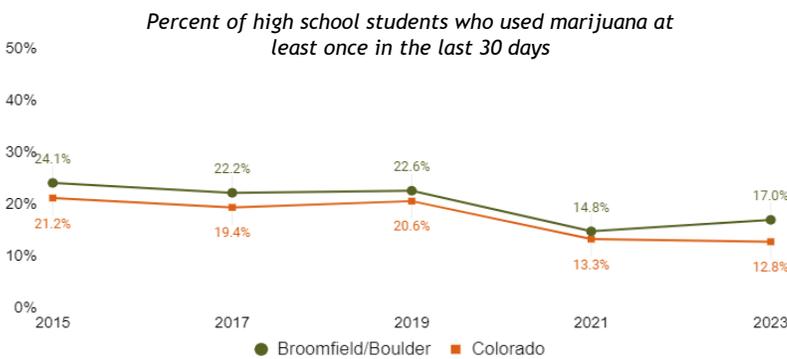
The human brain continues to develop from before birth into the mid-20s and is vulnerable to the effects of addictive substances, including marijuana.

- Frequent use changes the areas of the brain involved in attention, memory, decision-making, and motivation. Deficits in attention and memory have been detected in marijuana-using teens even after a month of abstinence.
- Frequent use of high concentration cannabis products is associated with uncontrollable vomiting, memory and concentration problems, addiction, and can trigger anxiety disorders and major psychiatric illnesses like schizophrenia and depression.

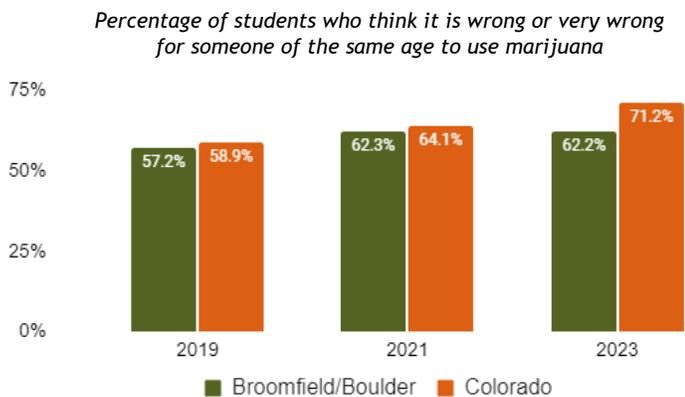
Modern cannabis plants contain significantly higher amounts of THC compared to decades ago. The risk of addiction and other negative consequences increases with exposure to high concentrations of THC and starting use at a younger age.

Of Broomfield/Boulder high schoolers who use marijuana, over 40% use high concentration products.

Fewer High School Students Report Using Marijuana



More Youth Believe that Marijuana Use is Wrong for Someone Their Age



Prevalence of Marijuana Use in Youth

- Since 2015, fewer high school students are reporting using marijuana in both Colorado and Broomfield/Boulder counties. Past 30 day marijuana use decreased from 21% to 13%, and 24% to 17%, respectively.
- However, marijuana use among high school students in Broomfield/Boulder counties is slightly higher than the state average.

Use of Marijuana by Grade Level

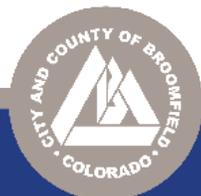
- Marijuana use among high school students increases as grade level increases. In 2023, use among 9th graders was 7%, compared to 12th graders at 29% in Broomfield/Boulder counties.

How are Youth Using Marijuana

- The majority (69%) of youth using marijuana report smoking it. There has been an increase in the number of youth who report vaping marijuana, which can be a form of high THC. Vaping marijuana delivers greater amounts of THC compared to smoking, which increases the likelihood of adverse reactions.

Youth Access to Marijuana

- About half of high school students feel it would be sort of easy or very easy to get marijuana if they wanted, which is down from previous years (61% in 2017 to 47% in 2023 in Broomfield/Boulder counties).



Community Engagement and Education

To create a community of prevention, Broomfield provides trainings, educational opportunities, and messaging to parents, schools, health care providers and youth. Broomfield also coordinates public education messages for adults on responsible use and safe storage to prevent underage use, accidental ingestion by youth and driving under the influence.

Broomfield hosts a community-based coalition, Communities That Care (CTC), that aims to improve youth mental wellbeing and reduce youth substance use through community connection, advocacy for positive activities and authentic youth engagement. CTC works to reduce risk factors and increase protective factors to prevent youth substance use. CTC's key strategies:

- **Creating Safe Spaces:** CTC works to create safe, inclusive spaces for all youth who live, work and play in Broomfield. Safe spaces provide opportunities for engaging in healthy behaviors, forming positive relationships and participating in activities that make it less likely that youth use substances.
- **Increasing Funding and Access to Activities:** CTC advocates for increased funding for school and community opportunities as well as youth volunteer opportunities and employment. These opportunities foster positive relationships and healthy coping mechanisms.
- **Youth Engagement and Education:** Youth for Youth (Y4Y), CTC's youth advisory group, promotes positive social norms and connectedness in Broomfield. CTC and Y4Y engage at events and with school partners to educate youth and adults about the harms and realities of substance use in our community.

PREVENTION CAMPAIGNS

Responsibility Grows Here

Education about state laws, responsible marijuana use, tips for talking to youth, information about marijuana and pregnancy and other community resources.

The Tea on THC

Information for youth and adults about high concentration THC.

Forward Together

Promotes youth connection to their peers, their parents and other trusted adults in their lives. Research shows that when they feel connected, they are healthier and more resilient.

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