Marijuana Effects

- MJ makes you feel great—until it doesn't. Short term positive effects are euphoria and enhanced perception. Not always so positive are: time distortion, hallucinations, anxiety (especially in patients with anxiety disorders), tachycardia, sleepiness, and impaired memory and problem solving.
- MJ has negative long term effects on chronic users, especially those who started in their teens. These include amotivational syndrome, less success than peers in school and career pursuits, and possibly a reduction in IQ points.
- MJ and psychosis are clearly associated. Smoking heavily can uncover a psychotic disorder earlier than it would have emerged otherwise. Whether it actually causes psychosis is more controversial.
- Don't smoke and drive. While high-driving is usually less hazardous than drunk-driving, MJ interferes with judgment and perceptions, leading to potential fatalities as well as arrests for DUls. The highest risk period is during the hour immediately after getting high.
- Withdrawal from regular MJ use does occur. A typical MJ detox in a heavy user will last 3 to 5 days and may include irritability, insomnia, anxiety, headache, nausea and vomiting, and sometimes diarrhea.
- We have no medications for treating marijuana use disorder. Dronabinol (Marinol) is a synthetic form of THC that is FDA approved for intractable nausea and AIDS wasting syndrome, but clinical trials have not shown it to be effective for substitution treatment of MJ abuse.

