

## Marijuana As Medicine: What does the science say?



### Our Wish List

- **There is medical value in marijuana, but that doesn't make smoked or ingested whole marijuana medicine.** Opium has medical value but we deliver it through Morphine – not by smoking heroin. So we must do research into what aspects of marijuana can be helpful and how they can be delivered safely.
- Marijuana is Schedule I because it meets the legal criteria for that –**there is currently is no FDA-approved product of whole, raw marijuana – smoked, eaten or vaporized.** But there *are* Schedule III products based on marijuana - like **Marinol**, the THC pill. Others, like **Sativex**, are being developed.
- In states where smoked marijuana for medical reasons is legal, **less than 5% of users have HIV, glaucoma, cancer or MS.** The average user is in his 30s and 40s and has a history of drug abuse, no chronic illness, and reports pain or headaches.
- **What about the case of a child with intractable seizures?** We can't blame parents for wanting to try anything that seems to work, but we owe it to these children to have medications their parents can get from a pharmacy, not amateurs. That is why **we must do the research on CBD (which does not get you high)** and other components in marijuana and deliver them in a safe way so doctors can prescribe them.
- **Marijuana has side effects.** Aside from making patients feel better, one of the main goals of treating an individual's pain is to improve functionality. Marijuana use often does the opposite. To minimize this and improve all of these side effects, we must prepare marijuana's components into proper medications.

- One To inform public policy with the science about today's marijuana
- Two To have a honest conversation about reducing the unintended consequences of marijuana policies, like stigma due to arrest.
- Three To prevent Big Tobacco from taking over Big Marijuana – a likely result of legalization.
- Four To promote research on marijuana in order to obtain nonsmoked, FDA-approved, pharmacy-dispensed, cannabis-based medications.



SAM (Smart Approaches to Marijuana) is a new coalition of professionals working for balanced, sensible policies that aim to reduce marijuana use.

For more details about SAM, visit [www.learnaboutsam.org](http://www.learnaboutsam.org)