Marijuana Abuse

Your exam shows you have used marijuana or pot. There are many health problems related to marijuana abuse. These include:

- Bronchitis.
- Chronic cough.
- Emphysema.
- Lung and upper airway cancer.

Abusers also experience impairment in:

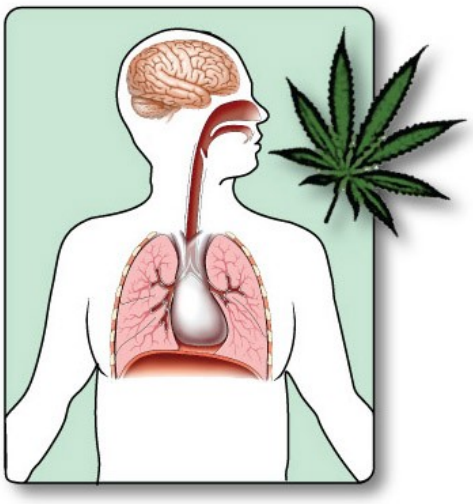
- Memory.
- Judgment.
- Ability to learn.
- Coordination.

Students who smoke marijuana:

- Get lower grades.
- Are less likely to graduate than those who do not.

Adults who abuse marijuana:

- Have problems at work.
- May even lose their jobs due to:
  - Poor work performance.
  - Absenteeism.



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Attention, memory, and learning skills have been shown to be diminished for up to 6 months after stopping regular use, and there is evidence that the effects can be cumulative over a lifetime.

Heavier use of marijuana also puts a strain on relationships with friends and loved ones and can lead to moodiness and loss of confidence. Acute intoxication can lead to:

- Increased anxiety.
- A panic episode.

It also increases the risk for having an automobile accident. This is especially true if the pot is combined with alcohol or other intoxicants. Treatment for acute intoxication is rarely needed. However, medicine to reduce anxiety may be helpful in some people.

Millions of people are considered to be dependent on marijuana. It is long-term regular use that leads to addiction and all of its complex problems. Information on the problem of addiction and the health problems of long-term abuse is posted at the National Institute for Drug Abuse website, www.drugabuse.gov. Consult with your doctor or counselor if you want further information and support in handling this common problem.

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