



Long-term effects of marijuana use may include:

- Reduced motivation and concentration
- Interference with school and job performance
- Respiratory problems due to smoking
- Impaired memory
- Psychosis (drug induced or mental illness)
- Increased severity of mental illness

Sources:

- Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
- National Institute on Drug Abuse
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Tips for Teens

Where To Go For Help

- The Department of Health offers community, regional, and out-of-territory services to help diagnose and treat people with addiction issues.
- Talk to a Mental Health Nurse or wellness counselor at your local health centre about seeking help for yourself or someone you know.
- Kids' Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868 (24/7)
- Nunavut Help Line at 1-800-265-3333 (7 p.m.–12 a.m. EST)
- Alcoholics Anonymous - for people who want to stop drinking or want support after they have quit drinking (1-888-616-4011) www.aacanada.com/
- Al-Anon - a group for families and friends of alcoholics. For more information: <http://al-anon.alateen.org/>

Funded by:



Developed with assistance from:



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Addictions

Embrace Life Council

PO Box 2259
Iqaluit, NU
X0A 0H0

www.inuusiq.com
1-867-975-3233

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ADDICTION

When a substance user can't stop taking a substance even if they want to, it's called addiction.

When people start taking substances, they don't plan to get addicted. They like how it makes them feel. They believe they can control how much and how often they take it. However, it changes the brain, and substance users start to need it just to feel normal. That is addiction, and it can quickly take over a person's life.

People abuse substances for many reasons. Taking it can feel really good for a short time. But even though someone may take more and more of a substance, the good feelings don't last. **They want to stop feeling bad.** Some people who feel very worried, afraid, or sad abuse substances to try to stop feeling so awful.

ALCOHOL

Alcohol is a substance that slows down parts of your brain. Drinking alcohol can make you feel more relaxed. It can also make it harder to think clearly, make good decisions and do various tasks.

Alcohol can make some people aggressive. For others, drinking can depress them or make them more depressed. When people are intoxicated (drunk), they may:

- Have blackouts (lose their memory)
- Feel sleepy or lose consciousness
- Be more likely to have falls and other accidents
- Get alcohol poisoning or die
- Take more risks and make bad decisions

Risks of alcohol use

- Young people are at higher risk of risky and dangerous behavior when they are drunk.
- Getting very drunk can kill you. A person who is drunk can “pass out”, throw up and choke to death on their own vomit.
- People who drink and drive a truck, car, skidoo or boat may have an accident that kills another person or themselves.
- Women who drink during pregnancy risk giving birth to a baby that has Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).
- FASD causes growth and development problems, head and facial deformities, joint problems, behavior problems and heart defects.
- Alcohol may make the medicine the doctor or nurse has prescribed less effective. It may also increase the effect of other drugs, including illegal drugs.

Practicing moderation

- There is no “safe” level of drinking that works for everyone.
- Pregnant women, men and women who have certain medical conditions, or who will be driving a vehicle should always avoid drinking.
- The “lower-risk” guidelines for healthy adults suggest having your drinks one hour

apart, sticking to the standardized portion sizes and not drinking more than two drinks in any drinking situation.



MARIJUANA

Marijuana, hashish and hash oil come from Cannabis sativa, a type of hemp plant. All three contain THC, a chemical that changes the way you think, feel and act. The word “Cannabis” is used to refer to all three.

Short-term effects may include:

- Mild paranoia, anxiety or panic
- Impaired reaction time, reduced coordination
- Increased appetite and short-term memory impairment are common
- Hallucinations
- Red eyes
- Increased heart rate and decrease in blood pressure (this could lead to fainting)