

CHEMICAL HEALTH TREND CORNER:

Watch Candy for Edible pot



Some marijuana edibles can be identical to actual candy.

Nearly two months after recreational marijuana sales started in Washington, drinkable forms of the drug have hit store shelves. Produced by Washington-based company Mirth Provisions, an aptly titled beverage line called "Legal" is currently available at eight of the state's 22 recreational marijuana stores, according to Fortune. The drinks come in five different flavors, including sparkling pomegranate and cold brew with milk and sugar.

[Read more:](#)

Teen Pot Use Could Fuel Opioid Abuse

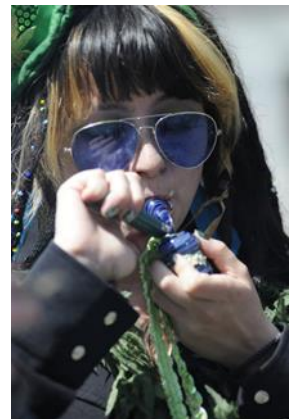
Despite activists' insistence that marijuana is harmless, one in nine marijuana users will become addicted to pot and early use of marijuana increases the likelihood that users will develop dependency on other drugs including prescription opioids and heroin, said Michael Botticelli, acting director of the White House's Office of National Drug Control Policy. [Read more:](#)

Why do Teens Use Drugs?

The teen years are often a time to explore and learn more about themselves as they approach adulthood. Often, this involves experimenting and testing their boundaries. The desire to do something new or risky is a normal part of teen development.

Teens who perceive little risk in using drugs are more likely to use drugs. Teens may also use drugs or alcohol to:

- Relieve boredom
- Feel good
- Forget their troubles and relax
- Satisfy their curiosity
- Ease their pain
- Feel grown up
- Show their independence
- Belong to a specific group



What are the Risk Factors and Protective Factors for Drug Use?

Effective drug prevention focuses on reducing the risk factors and strengthening the protective factors that are most closely related to substance abuse.

Risk factors are circumstances or events that increase a child's use and abuse of drugs. The more risk factors present, the more likely a child may be to use drugs and develop problems. Risk factors for drug use include:



- Low grades or failure in school
- Victim of bullying or cyberbullying
- Low self esteem
- Permissive parenting
- Parent or older sibling drug/alcohol use
- Living in a community with a high tolerance for smoking, drinking, or drug use among youth
- Attending a school without strict rules for tobacco, alcohol, or drugs and inconsistent enforcement for breaking those rules
- Belief that there is little risk in using a drug.

- Belief that using drugs may be harmful or risky

Remember that parents and caregivers are the most important role models in children's lives.

Secret life of teens: The dangerous drug parents aren't talking about with kids

When teens want to get high, many don't even have to leave home. All it takes is a visit to their parents' medicine cabinet. Prescription drug abuse — big problem among adults — is also spreading in schools. Kids are secretly reaching for painkillers, tranquilizers and stimulants prescribed for mom or dad, with many parents completely unaware.

Cyrus Stowe, a 17-year old in Dallas, Texas, decided to expose the problem at his high school and the resulting documentary, "Out of Reach," is a startling look at students popping pills without restraint. "It doesn't look harmful, there's no needle and they have no idea what they're taking in a lot of cases," Cyrus told NBC special anchor Maria Shriver as part of TODAY's series on the secret lives of teens.

"What we found out was, we'd go into the restroom and students right before a test would go into a stall, pop an Adderall, sometimes snort it, and trade more hard drugs like Oxycontin, Hydrocodone, and just take them as if it was vitamin C."

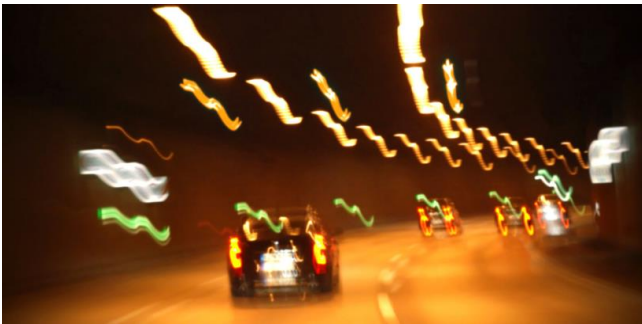
[Read more:](#)

Protective Factors

Protective factors are those characteristics that can reduce a person's risk for substance abuse or addiction. Protective factors that may decrease the risk of drug use include:

- Strong bond with a parent or caregiver
- High self esteem
- Parent or caregiver who talks regularly with their child about drugs
- Active in faith-based organizations, school, athletic, or community activities
- Spending time around positive role models
- Living in a community that offers youths activities where drugs and alcohol are not tolerated
- Attending a school with an effective alcohol and drug education program and a non-tolerance policy for alcohol and drugs

Drugged Driving What You Should Know



What is drugged driving? Driving under the influence of over-the-counter medications, prescription drugs, marijuana, or other illegal drugs.

Why is drugged driving dangerous? Over-the-counter medications and drugs affect the brain and can alter perception, mental processes, attention, balance, coordination, reaction time and other abilities required for safe driving. Even small amounts of some drugs can have a serious effect on driving ability.

What substances are used the most when driving? After alcohol, marijuana is the most commonly used drug.

What happens when you use drugs and drive? Marijuana can decrease a person's ability to drive a car. It slows reaction time, impairs a driver's concentration and attention, and reduces hand-eye coordination. It is dangerous to drive after mixing alcohol and marijuana. Driving after using prescription drugs or over-the-counter medicine, such as cough suppressants, antihistamines, sleeping aids, and anti-anxiety medications may impair driving ability.

Did you know? THC, the active ingredient in marijuana, is the substance most found in the blood of impaired drivers, fatally injured drivers, and motor vehicle crash victims.

TIP: Parents - tell your teen not to drive after using marijuana or other drugs, and don't get in a car with a driver who has used marijuana or other drugs!

FACT: More teens are driving after smoking marijuana than after heavy drinking. A national study showed that from 2009-2011, the percentage of high school seniors who drove after using marijuana was almost three times as high as those who drove after drinking heavily. (American Journal of Public Health 103:2027-2034)

More than one in eight high school seniors admitted in a national survey to driving under the influence of marijuana in the two weeks prior to the survey. (National Institute of Drug Abuse, 2012 Monitoring the Future Survey)

Remember: Many medications act on parts of the brain that can impair driving ability. Many prescription drugs have warning labels against the operation of machinery and driving motor vehicles, for a certain period of time after use. **You are more likely to be injured or in an accident while driving while under the influence of drug.**