



## CHEMICAL HEALTH TREND CORNER:

### Drug Trend Corner: Signs and Symptoms of Drug Use

By, Narconon, Drug Abuse Info.

There are many signs, both physical and behavioral, that indicate drug use. Each drug has its own unique manifestations, but there are some general indications that a person is using drugs:

- Sudden change in behavior
- Mood swings; irritable and grumpy and then suddenly happy and bright
- Withdrawal from family members
- Careless about personal grooming
- Loss of interest in hobbies, sports and other favorite activities
- Changed sleeping pattern; up at night and sleeping during the day
- Red or glassy eyes
- Sniffy or runny nose

[Read More](#) about the effects related to frequently using drugs and signs and symptoms of specific drug use.

### What your Kids need to know about Marijuana, Legalized or not

By Elizabeth J. Damico

"Parents need to emphasize a key reason why using marijuana (or alcohol for that matter) can be harmful to kids — their brains are still developing."

Family members and friends constantly ask me for advice about what they should be saying to their kids about marijuana. Parents should talk to their kids about it in the same way they do about that other common, socially acceptable drug — alcohol.

If they don't know, parents need to find out what marijuana does to the body. For example, it can change users' moods and how they perceive what's happening around them. It impairs motor functions. At the same time, parents should explain that marijuana can help cancer patients by relieving nausea and pain. Discussing why people want to use marijuana recreationally, and why they want it legalized, is trickier because many parents don't want to portray its use as socially acceptable for teens. But in fact



children and teens are already bombarded with “try it, legalize it” advertising and discussions.

It's not a good idea for kids to use marijuana. Parents should tell their children that just because something feels good and is legal for adults doesn't mean it's safe or that it doesn't cause problems. Alcohol, again, is the prime example — it's legal and safely enjoyed by many adults, but it can lead to car accidents, health problems and dependency. Cigarettes are legal too, but they cause cancer.

[Read More](#)

## **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Substance Abuse and Co-Occurring Disorders**

Authors: Joanna Saisan, M.S.W., Melinda Smith, M.A., and Jeanne Segal, Ph.D. Last updated: October 2016.

When you have both a substance abuse problem and a mental health issue such as depression, bipolar disorder, or anxiety, it is called a co-occurring disorder or dual diagnosis. Dealing with substance abuse, alcoholism, or drug addiction is never easy, and it's even more

difficult when you're also struggling with mental health problems, but there are treatments that can help. With proper treatment, support, and self-help strategies, you can overcome a dual diagnosis and reclaim your life.

Understanding the link between substance abuse and mental health In a dual diagnosis, both the mental health issue and the drug or alcohol addiction have their own unique symptoms that may get in the way of your ability to function, handle life's difficulties, and relate to others. To make the situation more complicated, the co-occurring disorders also affect each other and interact. When a mental health problem goes untreated, the substance abuse problem usually gets worse as well. And when alcohol or drug abuse increases, mental health problems usually increase too.

What comes first: Substance abuse or the mental health problem? Addiction is common in people with mental health problems. But although substance abuse and mental health disorders like depression and anxiety are closely linked, one does not directly cause the other.



Alcohol or drugs are often used to self-medicate the symptoms of depression or anxiety. Unfortunately, substance abuse causes side effects and in the long run worsens the very symptoms they initially numbed or relieved.

Alcohol and drug abuse can increase underlying risk for mental disorders. Mental disorders are caused by a complex interplay of genetics, the environment, and other outside factors. If you are at risk for a mental disorder, drug or alcohol abuse may push you over the edge.

Alcohol and drug abuse can make symptoms of a mental health problem worse. Substance abuse may sharply increase symptoms of mental illness or trigger new symptoms. Alcohol and drug abuse also interact with medications such as antidepressants, anti-anxiety pills, and mood stabilizers, making them less effective.

[Click Here for Signs and Symptoms](#)

## **Marijuana Talk Kit: Now Available in Spanish**



Between marijuana legalization, the normalization in pop culture and new ways of using (edibles, vaporizers, concentrates), it's becoming more complicated for parents to talk to their teens. So, where do you start? And what should you say?

We're here to help. [Download our free Marijuana Talk Kit, available in English and Spanish](#), to get tips on how to have meaningful, productive conversations with your teen about marijuana. Download the Kit in Spanish »

A majority of teens report healthier behaviors and thriving at school. Trouble spots include e-cigarettes and mental health.

ST. PAUL, Minn. – A majority of Minnesota students feel highly engaged in school, believe their school provides a supportive place for learning, report good health, and feel safe in their homes, neighborhoods and schools according to a new report on results.



of the 2016 Minnesota Student Survey (MSS).

The survey results continue a trend ongoing since the 1990s of teens making healthier choices related to drinking, smoking and sexual activity. However, the survey also provides important evidence that Minnesota's generally positive results hide health gaps suffered by economically disadvantaged teens and teens of color.

[READ Full Survey](#)

## **Chemical Health Corner: Today's Heroin Epidemic**

Author: CDC 24/7 Control for Disease Control and Prevention

### **Overview**

Heroin use has increased across the US among men and women, most age groups, and all income levels. Some of the greatest increases occurred in demographic groups with historically low rates of heroin use: women, the privately insured, and people with higher incomes.

Not only are people using heroin, they are also abusing multiple other substances, especially cocaine and prescription opioid painkillers. As

heroin use has increased, so have heroin-related overdose deaths.

Between 2002 and 2013, the rate of heroin-related overdose deaths nearly quadrupled, and more than 8,200 people died in 2013. States play a central role in prevention, treatment, and recovery efforts for this growing epidemic. Heroin use more than doubled among young adults ages 18–25 in the past decade.

More than 9 in 10 people who used heroin also used at least one other drug.

45% of people who used heroin were also addicted to prescription opioid painkillers.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS PROBLEM](#)

## **TEENS AND THE REAL DANGER OF MARIJUANA EDIBLES: WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW**

The prefrontal cortex of my teenage son's brain isn't fully developed.

It's a fact I have been forced to remind myself of several times a day, sometimes several times an hour,

# PARENT THE POWER OF PARENTS YOUR CHILD

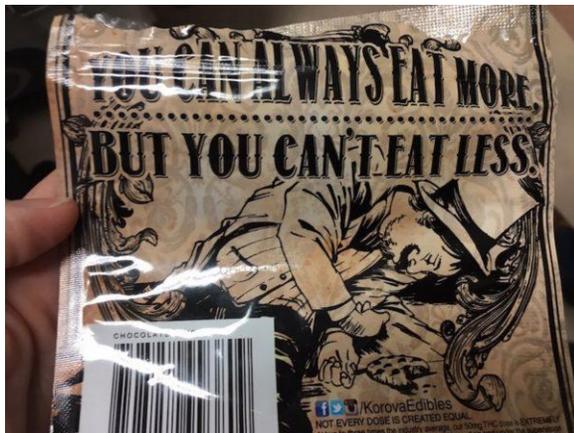


since that fateful call a few weeks back.

"Don't freak out," my ex-husband had warned when I picked up the phone, his voice grave and a bit shaky. After pausing for what felt like an eternity, he informed me that our 17-year-old son had ingested some type of drug and was being transported by ambulance to the emergency room.

Some type of ... drug?

I freaked out.



Racing to the hospital, I struggled to wrap my head around what I'd just been told. My son was a straight-A student, a member of the National Honor Society, a varsity athlete. He was in the throes of submitting applications to highly ranked universities and striving to establish

his individuality in cleverly constructed college essays. Over the years, we'd had countless talks about drug and alcohol use, the risks of addiction, the potentially life-changing (or even life-ending) consequences. There was just no way he was using drugs!

But to my shock, he turned out to be among a growing number of teenagers across the U.S. experimenting with marijuana edibles. Call me naïve, but I had never before even heard the term "edibles," widely used to describe a new generation of pot-laced baked goods, candies and beverages that are both made at home and sold by dispensaries in colorful packages and flavors that appeal to kids. I suppose I never had any reason to.

But now, my identity as a mother feels permanently scarred by an irrevocable chasm; the parent I was before receiving that harrowing call, and the one I became from that moment forward. The mom I had been when I recognized the word "edible" as simply an adjective, and the one I was forced to become the instant it took shape as a vile noun.

[READ MORE OF THIS STORY](#)