



## **Getting Help for Marijuana Dependency at Wellness Retreat Recovery Center**

Depressants are a class of drugs that includes both legal and illicit substances such as alcohol, benzodiazepines, and heroin. The most popular and arguably most controversial depressant, however, is probably marijuana. This drug seems to saturate today's substance use culture and spark debate over its legality and medicinal uses. Still, whether you are for or against its use in medicine, you cannot deny that like any other drug, marijuana has addictive qualities that could prove dangerous for the user if misused recreationally. Marijuana dependence and addiction is addressed throughout treatment at The Wellness Retreat Recovery.

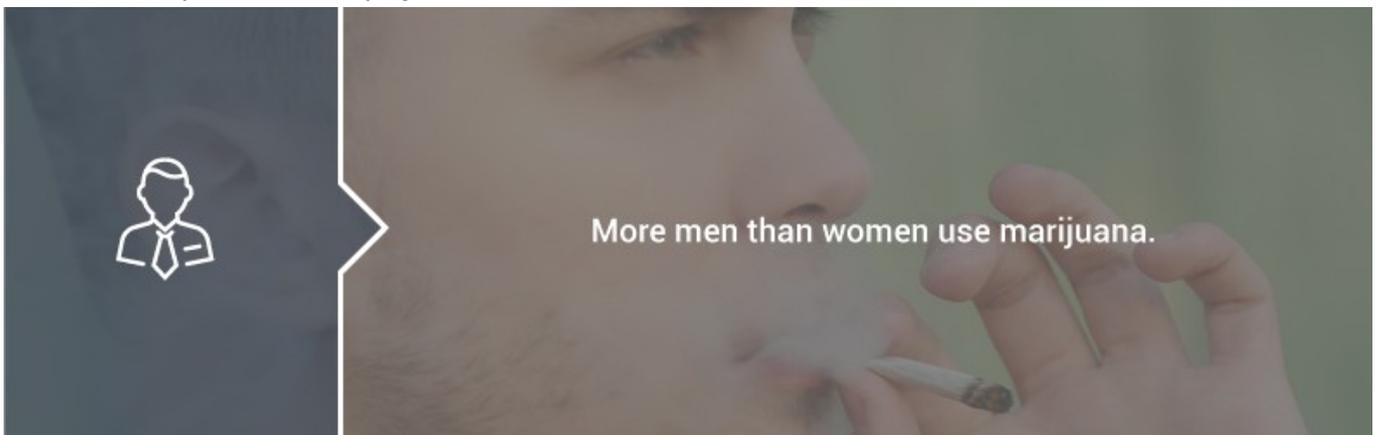


Marijuana is the most commonly used illicit drug in the U.S.

## **The Most Infamous Gateway Drug**

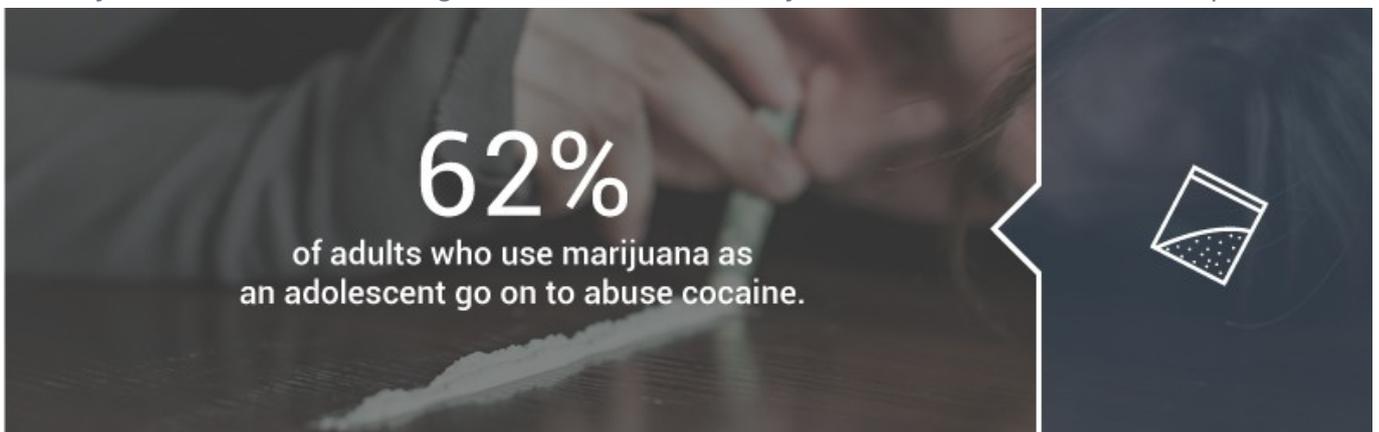
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The strongest argument that law enforcement and the public at large have against the recreational use of marijuana is its label as a gateway drug. Gateway drugs are typically less harmful ones that “open the door” for other, more harmful substance abuse. In the case of marijuana use, several studies have already proven that marijuana actually does significantly less damage than other drugs. This includes alcohol, a legal substance that is widely available to anyone 21 or older. However, the use of and addiction to marijuana could lead to various complications in physical, mental and emotional health.



### **Is Marijuana an Addictive Substance?**

It's been heavily debated whether or not marijuana is actually an addictive substance. However, according to the evidence that's been made available through studies, marijuana is addictive— just not in the same way that other drugs like heroin, alcohol, and benzodiazepines are. While it may not elicit any physical dependence, the continued use of marijuana is habit-forming, which is one of the strongest reasons why it is widely considered a gateway drug. Simply put, anyone addicted to marijuana may suffer psychological distress when they are unable to access or use it. Such distress may include feelings of agitation, anxiety, and other mood swings as well as the inability to concentrate or even sleep.



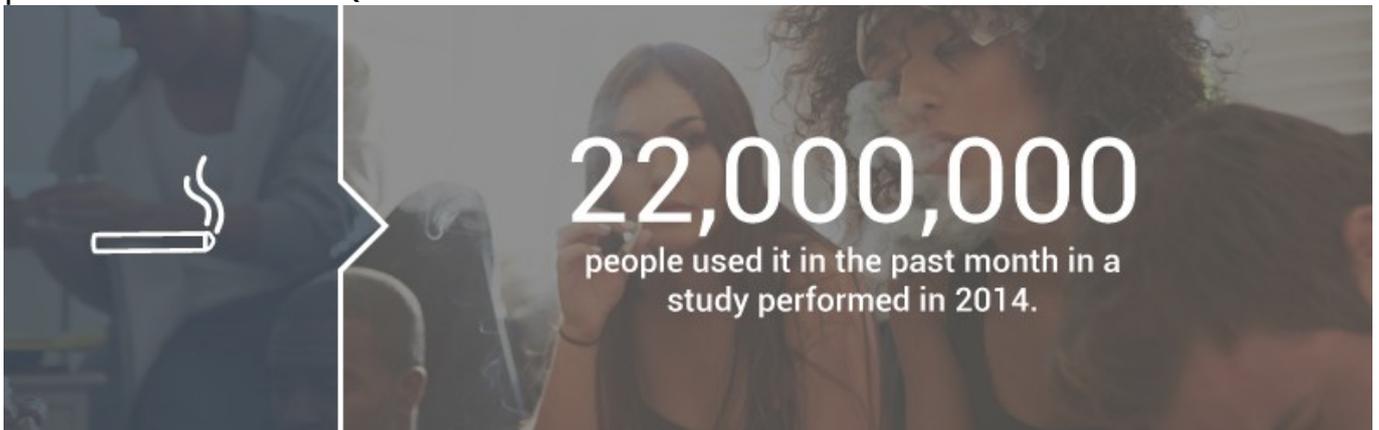
## The Varying Effects of Marijuana

Like many other psychoactive substances, marijuana has different effects on different people. The effects of marijuana use seem to vary in accordance with the user's state of mind, previous experience with mind-altering drugs, and a number of other factors. For the most part, however, marijuana users may feel at least one of the following short-term effects:

- decreased coordination and fine motor control
- short-term memory loss or impairment
- lowered perceptions of space and time
- physical and/or emotional relaxation
- increased appetite
- lowered inhibition
- hallucinations
- drowsiness
- psychosis
- paranoia
- fear

Of course, like any other drug, marijuana dependence comes with a number of potential long-term effects, too. Aside from the potential development of addiction to other drugs, the long-term effects of marijuana use usually includes:

- inability to learn new things or complete complex tasks
- changes in overall character or behavior
- impaired cognitive functions
- possible decline in IQ



## Overcoming Marijuana Dependence

Addiction to marijuana is not any better or easier than addiction to any other drug. The continued and seemingly harmless recreational use of the drug eventually inhibits all other

aspects of the user's life. However, there are multiple resources available through both inpatient and outpatient treatment programs to help those addicted to marijuana reclaim their lives and give up the drug for good. At Wellness Retreat Recovery Center, we offer addiction therapy, detox, aftercare, and other necessary **resources** to help with marijuana dependence and addiction.