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Articles:

Health Effects of Marijuana



National Library of Medicine: Cannabis Use Disorder



Endorsing Cannabis as an Opioid Substitute 'Irresponsible'



Addiction as a Coping Mechanism



Substance Misuse Prevention: A Collection of Readings

Drug Substitution: What You Should Know



<https://thehempdoctor.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/bigstock-Marijuana-And-Alcohol.jpg>

Drug substitution, also known as drug displacement or replacement, is a person's conscious switch from one drug to another. Common motivations for drug substitution include the drug user's perception of higher drug purity, greater availability or lower cost of the substitute drug, or positive expectations regarding the effects of the substitute drug (Shapira et al., 2020). Additionally, there are many reasons why an individual would continue to turn to substances as a coping mechanism. A person may turn to alcohol and other drugs as a coping mechanism for stress, difficult emotions, physical ailments, or other issues. High stress levels and hyperactive nerve activity can lead a person to want to use drugs or alcohol in order to cope (American Addiction Centers, 2023). One common belief is to replace alcohol with vaping marijuana or nicotine. Replacing one substance with another still poses risk. It impacts a person's mental, social and physical health and increases the risk of dependence on a new substance. Using substances to cope with emotions robs an individual of learning how to manage their feelings and emotions naturally. It may also mask a mental health condition that could be helped with medication. Replacing one substance with another increases stress levels, interferes with an individual's development of self-confidence and their level of self-efficacy.

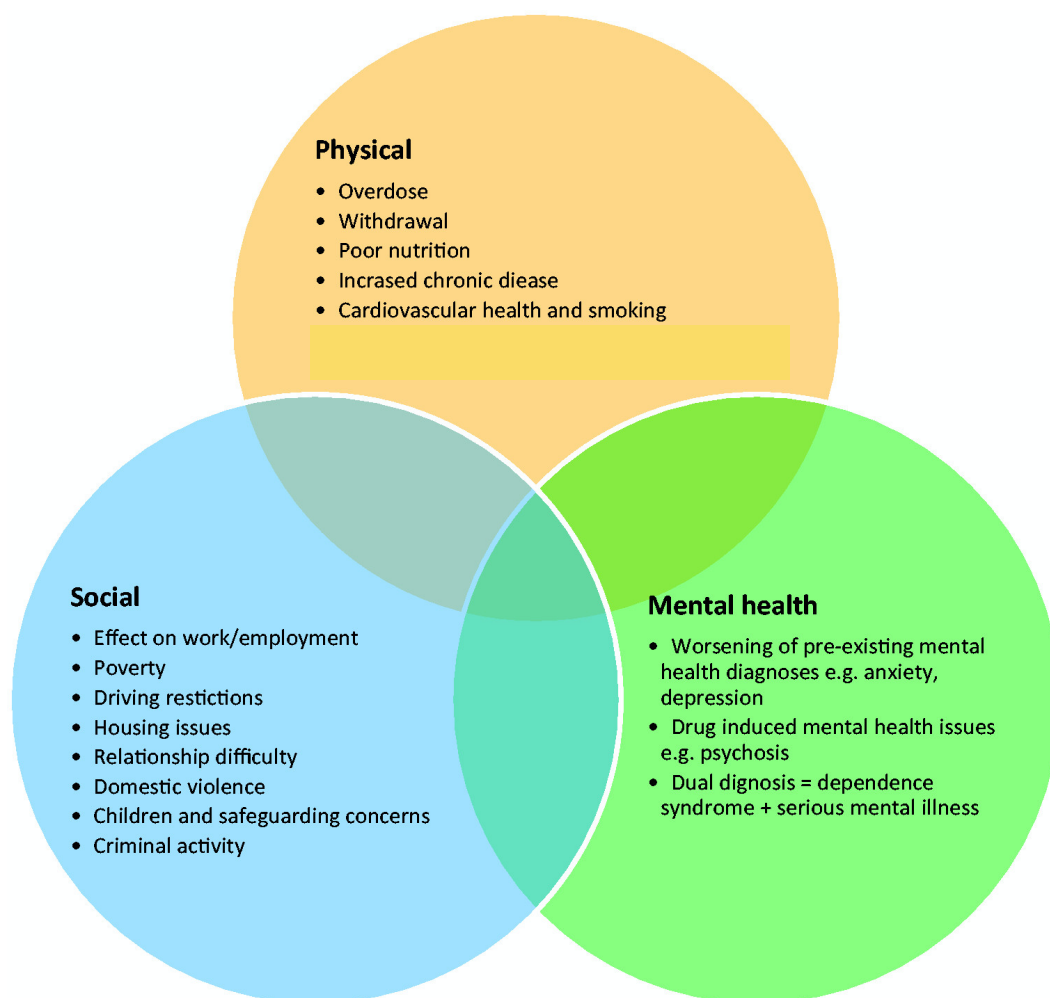


Figure 1: Social, physical, and mental health risks associated with drug use (Mylan, 2019)

Cannabis Use Disorder (CDC, 2023)

It is estimated that three in ten people who use cannabis have cannabis use disorder. Additionally, the risk of developing marijuana disorder is greatest in people who start using marijuana during youth or adolescence. People who have cannabis use disorder may be at higher risk for other negative consequences such as problems with attention, memory, and learning. Frequent marijuana use can cause disorientation and is frequently associated with unpleasant thoughts or feelings of anxiety and paranoia. Individuals who use cannabis are more likely to develop temporary psychosis and long-lasting mental disorders, including schizophrenia. Lastly, marijuana has also been linked to depression, social anxiety, thoughts of suicide, suicide attempts, and suicide.

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