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### Articles

#### [Marijuana and Public Health](#)



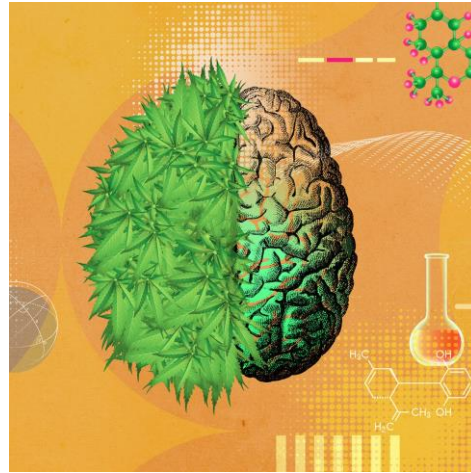
#### [Cannabis and Mental Health](#)



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# Substance Misuse Prevention Newsletter: A Collection of Readings Cannabis and Mental Health



## A Brief Overview

Many people report using marijuana to cope with anxiety and stress. A 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health in the U.S. found that 22.2 million people ages 12 and older had used marijuana in the past month (ADAI, 2017). Previous research has suggested that marijuana use has increased in the past decade mostly due to the perception, that marijuana is less harmful (Compton et al., 2016). The substance that is primarily responsible for the effect of marijuana on an individual's mental state, THC, appears to decrease anxiety at lower doses and increase anxiety at higher doses. Using marijuana to cope with anxiety may offer a short-term benefit, but well-controlled studies indicate that use of marijuana is associated with an increased likelihood of substance use disorders (ADAI, 2017).

#### Marijuana and the Developing Brain (CDC, 2022)

The brain actively develops until around age 25. Marijuana use during adolescence and young adulthood may harm the developing brain. Negative effects may include:

- Difficulty thinking and problem solving
- Problems with memory and learning
- Reduced coordination
- Difficulty maintaining attention
- Problems with school and social life



## Coping Strategies for Anxiety and Depression (ADAA, 2022)

**Eat well-balanced meals-** don't skip any meals and keep healthy, energy-boosting snacks on hand.

**Water- Nuts-Yogurt-Trail Mix-Apple, Banana or celery with Peanut Butter-Popcorn-Cheese-Veggies and hummus...**

**Get enough sleep-** when stressed, your body needs additional rest and sleep.

**Exercise frequently-** to help you feel good and maintain your health.

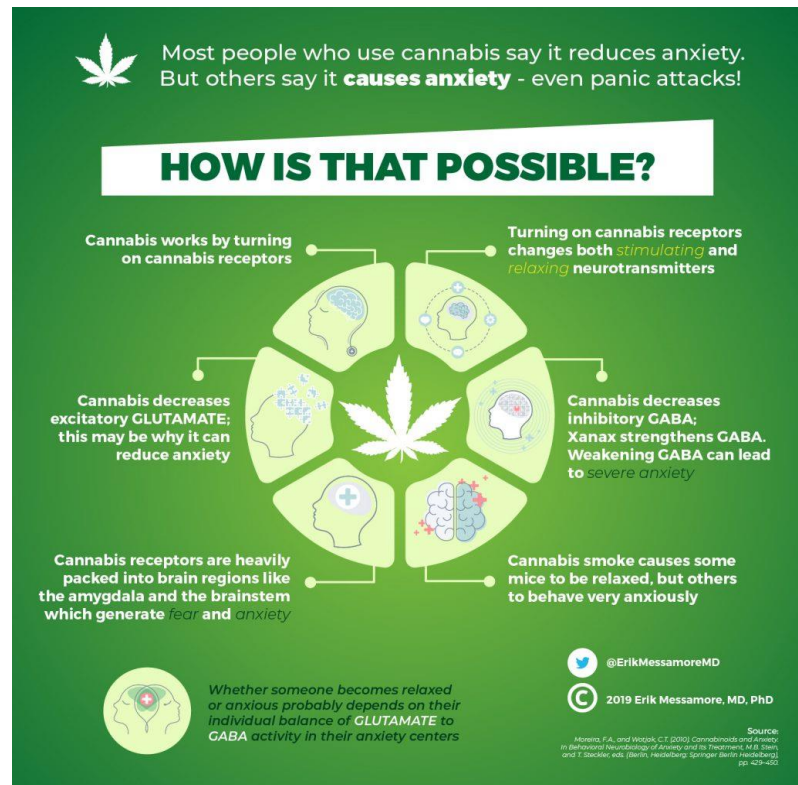
**Get involved-** volunteer or find another way to be active in your community, which creates a support network for you and gives you a break from everyday stress.

**Talk to someone-** tell your friends and family that you're feeling overwhelmed, and let them know how they can help you.

**Welcome humor-** a good laugh goes a long way.

## Cannabis ~ Anxiety and Depression in Young Adults

A study done by Hayatbakhsh et al. (2007) worked to examine whether the age of first use or the frequency of use of cannabis is associated with anxiety and depression (AD) in young adults. The study initially hypothesized that individuals who begin using cannabis in early adolescence and use it frequently are at an increased risk of AD in early adulthood based on previous research. A sample of 3,239 young adults were followed from birth to the age of 21. Data was obtained on the sample's experience with AD as well as their cannabis use. The results concluded those who used cannabis before 15 years of age and used it frequently at age 21 were more likely to report symptoms of AD in early adulthood, independently of whether the person also uses other illicit drugs (Hayatbakhsh et al., 2007).



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