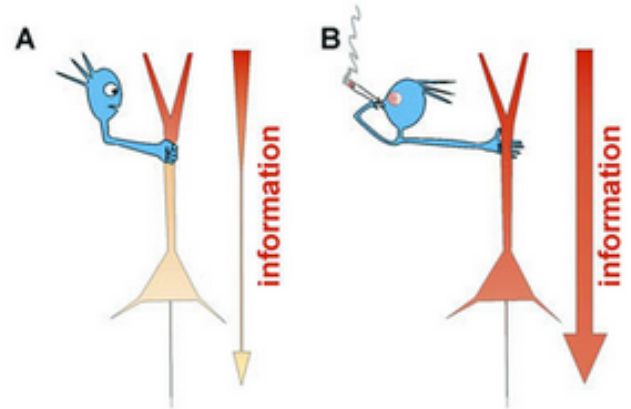


# Information About Marijuana

## Cannabis

Cannabis, (also known as marijuana, weed, dope, pot, reefer, grass, ganja, and many more) is ever growing in popularity in America. The main active ingredient in marijuana is delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) which is a psychoactive ingredient found within the leaves of the plant. THC causes the effects felt when someone smokes or ingests it.

Upon smoking, THC travels through the lungs, to the blood, is pumped throughout the body by the heart, reaches the Blood- Brain- Barrier where it will then enter the brain. Once in the brain, THC will bind to the Cannabinoid Receptors in the brain. This causes an increase in Dopamine release, which gives the feeling of reward and happiness felt from using cannabis and results in the feelings of being stoned or high.



Neuron (brain cells) increase their release of Dopamine when THC binds to cannabinoid receptors



## Short Term Effects

Short-term effects include relaxation, red eyes, sense of happiness, dry mouth and throat, hunger (ex. the munchies), reduction in body temperature, altered perception such as distortion of time and intensified senses of touch, smell, and taste, panic, nausea, vomiting, confusion, anxiety, and paranoia. Many people who experience the unpleasant side effects of marijuana will visit the ER, although there are no reported deaths from strictly marijuana (not including laced marijuana or mixing drugs with marijuana).

## Long Term Effects

While some people think using cannabis is harmless, it has been linked to slowed brain development and mental illness through frequent use, particularly if regular use began at a young age. Throat and lung problems, coughing and wheezing, heart or blood pressure problems, increased risk of cancer, short and long term

## Useful Links

- <http://www.photo-digital-electronic.com/the-science-of-drugs/>
- <http://learn.genetics.utah.edu/content/addiction/mouse/>
- <http://www.whitehouse.gov/ondc/p/frequently-asked-questions-and-facts-about-marijuana>
- <http://www.recovery.org/topics/marijuana-recovery/>
- <http://drugabuse.com/library/marijuana-abuse/>