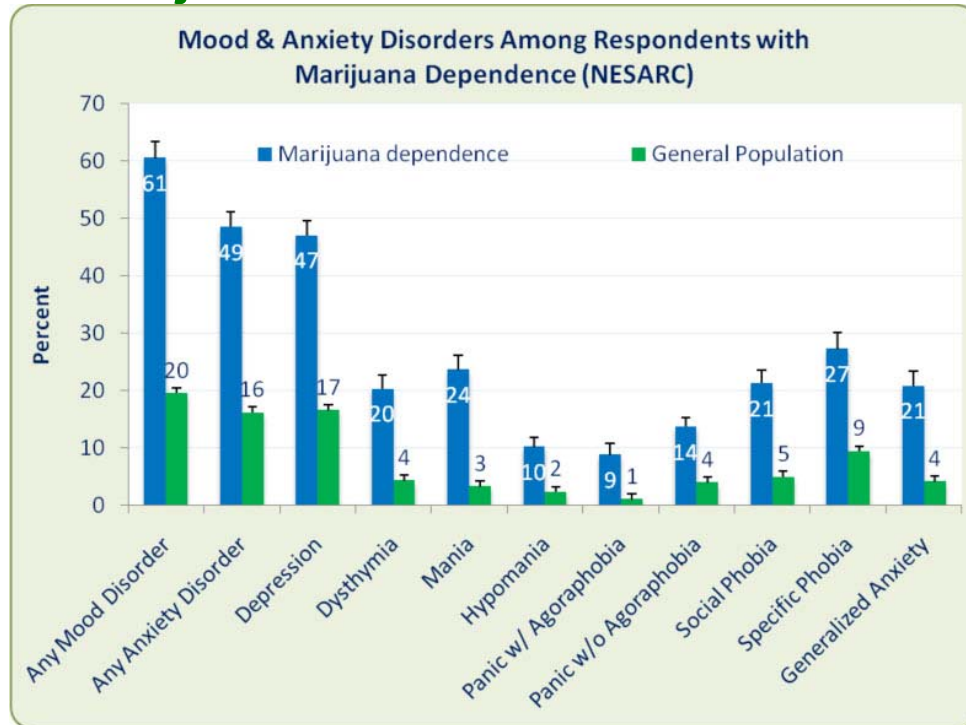


Marijuana and Mental Illness (con't)



Graph courtesy National Institute of Drug Abuse.

- Regular marijuana use increases the risk of developing serious mental illness. As reported in the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) report (2005), the younger a person is when they begin to use marijuana, the more likely they are to develop serious mental illness in their lifetime. The report shows that more than 2,250,000 adults aged 18-to-25, who reported lifetime marijuana use, developed serious mental illness: 10.5% (almost 240,000) started using marijuana at age 18 or older; fully twice as many, 21% (more than 450,000) started before the age of 12. This report clearly indicates a correlation between marijuana use and the development of serious mental illness with the risk being higher the younger the onset of use.
- Marijuana Linked to I.Q. Decline: Researchers at Carleton University in Ottawa, compared the IQ scores of 74 participants who took IQ tests between the ages of 9-and-12 and then again between the ages of 17-and-20. Participants were tested for drug use throughout the study period. The researchers found that participants who smoked five-or-more marijuana cigarettes a week had a decline in their IQ scores compared to the test results taken in their preteen years. However, the IQ of those who smoked heavily and quit was not affected. The study is published in the May 2002 issue of the Canadian Medical Association Journal.
- Adolescents and young adults who are heavy users of marijuana are more likely than non-users to have disrupted brain development: “Diffusion Abnormalities in Adolescents and Young Adults with a History of Heavy Cannabis Use”, Ashtari, M., Cervellione, K., Cottone, J., Ardekani, B.A., Kumra, S., Journal of Psychiatric Research, January 2009.
- In February, 2010, researchers at Queensland Brain Institute and School of Population Health reported results of a study which began in the early 1980s. In the study, a group of 3800 children born in a Brisbane, Australia hospital were followed for almost 30 years. Results of this study offered some of the most credible and convincing evidence to date. Those who began marijuana use at an early age were THREE times more likely to suffer from some form of psychotic disorders by the time they reach the age of 21, including hallucinations, psychosis, delusions, and schizophrenia.
- Research suggests that delta-9-THC, the principal active ingredient in marijuana, can cause transient schizophrenia-like symptoms, such as suspiciousness, delusions, and impairments in memory and attention. The study, led by D. Cyril D'Souza, M.D., professor of psychiatry at Yale School of Medicine, set out to explore a long-known association between cannabis and psychosis, Neuropsychopharmacology, June 2004.