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# Medicinal Marijuana

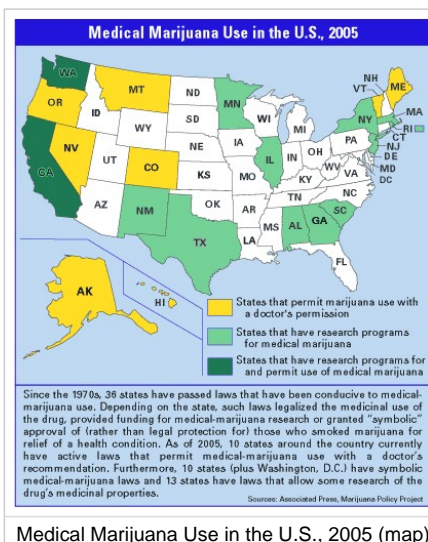
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[http://www.thebongplace.com/blog/wp-content/medical\\_marijuanapreview.jpg](http://www.thebongplace.com/blog/wp-content/medical_marijuanapreview.jpg)

## OVERVIEW

Marijuana is a plant that has been used for a variety of purposes by many cultures. The plant- whether smoked, eaten, or rubbed into the skin- has been used as a medicine to relieve a number of health problems. Medical cannabis refers to the use of the cannabis plant as a physician-recommended drug or herbal therapy. So far, the U.S. has made thirteen states legal for the use of medicinal marijuana: Alaska, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Maine, Michigan, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont and Washington. Other countries such as Canada, Austria, the Netherlands, Spain, Israel, Finland, and Portugal have legalized this plant as well. Marijuana is the nation's most commonly used illicit drug. More than 83 million Americans (37 percent) age 12 and older have tried marijuana at least once, according to the 2001 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse. The active ingredient in the plant, THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) is psychoactive, in that it interacts with the central nervous system and can alter perception, mood, and behavior.



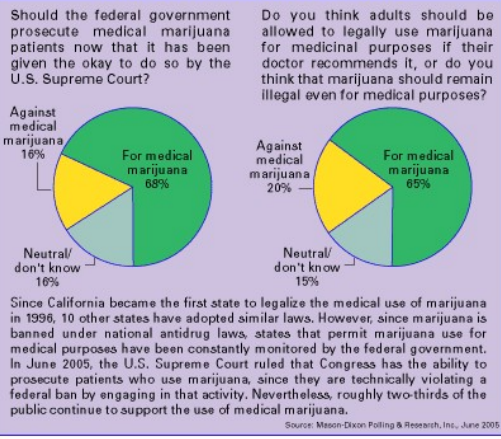
## PROS

Marijuana provides pain relief to thousands of sick and elderly Americans who find traditional medications ineffective. In a 2002 study, medical cannabis was shown to have effects of treatment in cases of; nausea, vomiting, PMS, unintentional weight loss, lack of appetite, migraines, multiple sclerosis, and spinal cord injuries. Other studies show cannabis to be useful in treating alcoholism, ADD, autism, bipolar, leukemia, and depression. It isn't more harmful than alcohol or tobacco when used in moderation. Advocates say that in numerous cases it is the only treatment that has been shown to work. "It's a very effective medication for people who have failed to get good results from standard meds." Proponents of the drug's medical uses said that it has improved the lives of thousands of terminally ill patients. Since the 1900's public opinion polls have consistently showed that a majority of Americans approve the legalization of medical pot. Congress and the Justice Department have a choice between wasting taxpayers' dollars and arresting seriously ill patients who use medical cannabis or they can choose more worthwhile priorities, like protecting national security and targeting violent criminals.

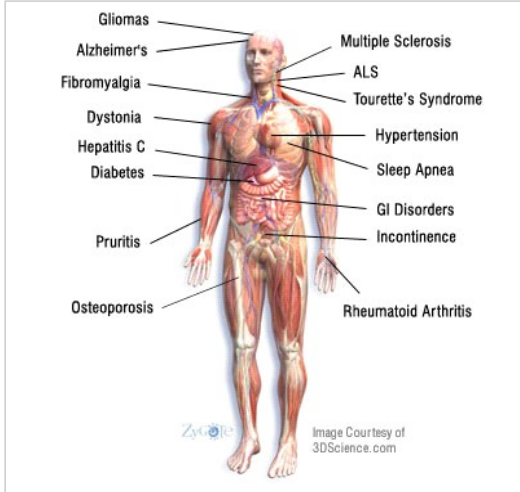
Dr Greg Goldmakher of Springfield says, "I am saddened that the justices paid little attention to states' rights and still less to the rights of patients. Whether to use cannabis in a given case should be decided by a patient and his or her physician."

[Obama](#)

Public Opinion on Medical Marijuana



Public Opinion on Medical Marijuana (charts)



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"[http://intraspec.ca/images/NORML\\_conditionsmap\\_rev.jpg](http://intraspec.ca/images/NORML_conditionsmap_rev.jpg)" cannot be displayed, because it contains errors.

**CONS**

People against the use of medical marijuana argue that the plant has not been FDA-approved because it is too dangerous for use by society, and that the use of marijuana is unnecessary due to various drugs already FDA-approved. Marijuana, some say, is addictive, damages the brain, injures the lungs, harms the immune system, interferes with fertility, and impairs driving ability. Marijuana is often used as a stepping-stone drug, leading to heroin, cocaine, or other harder drugs. If marijuana becomes easily accessible to the public, it could lead to other drug related problems. Legalization would increase the chances of the drug falling into the hands of kids and some still consider use of the drug as morally wrong. Because of drug-related arrests, people who have committed or are likely to commit more serious crimes can be taken off the streets. If the legalization of medicinal cannabis becomes more widespread, use would increase the dangers of secondhand smoke-damage to bystanders. Officials also say that medical marijuana is a front for drug legalization and that people who claim medical use are actually using it for recreational pleasure. [US Government Officials' Views](#)



[http://feed.examiner.com/images/blog/wysiwyg/image/Marijuana\\_250.jpg](http://feed.examiner.com/images/blog/wysiwyg/image/Marijuana_250.jpg)

## VIDEO

<http://vodpod.com/watch/1312257-marijuana-industry-is-booming-in-california-worth-tens-of-billions> ↗

## QUESTIONS

- 1.) Do you think people should be allowed to use marijuana for medical purposes? Why or why not?
- 2.) Would legalizing marijuana have any impact on the overall war on drugs?
- 3.) Do you think the federal government or a physician has the right to regulate medical marijuana usage?

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

charts, pictures, and info.= <http://www.2facts.com/ICOF/Search/i1000380.asp> ↗

video= <http://vodpod.com/watch/1312257-marijuana-industry-is-booming-in-california-worth-tens-of-billions> ↗

pros and cons= <http://medicalmarijuana.procon.org/viewresource.asp?resourceID=000141> ↗

US Gov. Officials views= <http://medicalmarijuana.procon.org/viewresource.asp?resourceID=000141#> ↗

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