



Marijuana as medicine:

What does the science say?

- **There is medical value in marijuana but that doesn't make smoked or ingested raw marijuana medicine.** Opium also has medical value but we deliver it through Morphine – not by injecting heroine. So we must increase research about the medicinal components of marijuana and the safest forms of their delivery.
- Marijuana is classified as Schedule I because it meets the legal criteria for that – **there is currently no FDA-approved product of whole, raw marijuana – smoked, ingested, or vaporized.** But there are Schedule III marijuana-based products such as *Marinol*, and others like *Sativex*, are being development.
- In states with medical marijuana laws, **less than 5% of users have a serious illness like HIV, glaucoma, cancer, or MS.** The average user is in his mid 30s, has a history of drug abuse, no chronic illness, and reports only pain and headaches.¹

Our Wish List:

- One** To inform public policy with the science about today's marijuana.
- Two** To have an honest conversation about reducing the unintended consequences of marijuana policies, like stigma due to arrest.
- Three** To prevent the emergence of a Big Marijuana industry.
- Four** To promote research on marijuana in order to obtain nonsmoked, FDA-approved, pharmacy-dispensed cannabis medications.

- **What about children with intractable seizures?** We can't blame parents for wanting to try anything that seems to work, but we owe it to these children to have medications their parents can get from a pharmacy, not amateurs. **This is why we must do the research on CBD (which is no psychoactive) and other components of marijuana** and deliver them in a safe way that allows doctors to prescribe them.
- **Marijuana has side effects.** One of the main goals of treating pain is to improve a patient's functionality. Marijuana use often does the opposite. To minimize this and improve all side effects, we must prepare marijuana's components into proper medications.

Notes:

¹O'Connell, T.J. & Bou-Matar, C.B., 2007

What is Project SAM?

Smart Approaches to Marijuana is a nonpartisan alliance of lawmakers, scientists and other concerned citizens who want to move beyond simplistic discussions of "incarceration versus legalization" when discussing marijuana use, and instead focus on practical changes in marijuana policy that neither demonizes users nor legalizes the drug. SAM supports a treatment, health-first marijuana policy.