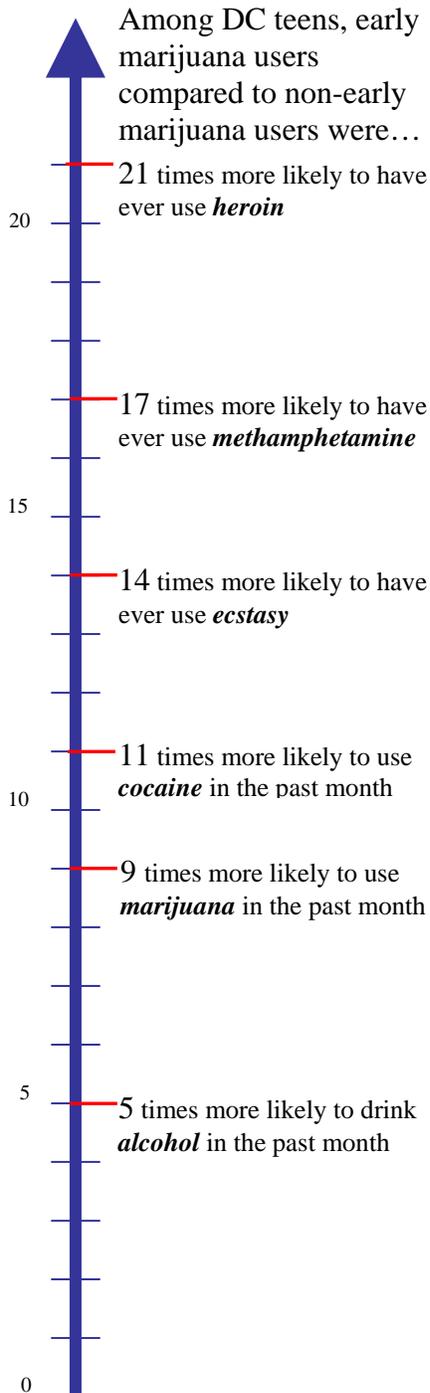


Is Early Marijuana Use (Before Age 13) Among DC Teenagers Associated With Other Risky Behaviors?¹



Among DC teens, early marijuana users compared to non-early marijuana users were...

21 times more likely to have ever use *heroin*

17 times more likely to have ever use *methamphetamine*

14 times more likely to have ever use *ecstasy*

11 times more likely to use *cocaine* in the past month

9 times more likely to use *marijuana* in the past month

5 times more likely to drink *alcohol* in the past month

Approximately one in ten DC teens was an early marijuana user. Males were more likely than females to be early marijuana users. Early marijuana users were more likely than non-early marijuana users to have:

- Ever used other drugs
- Used other drugs in the past month
- Carried a weapon in the past month
- Physically fought in the past year
- Had sex in the past three months.

What Are the Effects of Marijuana?²

Marijuana use can affect a teen's performance in school, sports, and other activities. The short-term effects of marijuana use include:

- Problems with memory and learning;
- Distorted perceptions (sights, sounds, time, touch);
- Trouble with thinking and problem-solving;
- Loss of motor coordination; and
- Increased heart rate.

Although all of the long-term effects of regular marijuana use are not yet known, studies reveal serious health concerns. Regular use of marijuana may play a role in cancer and problems of the immune and respiratory systems. In addition, regular marijuana use may impair the ability of T-cells in the lungs' immune system to fight off some infections, and long-term users may develop many of the same breathing problems as tobacco smokers (e.g., daily cough, chest colds, lung infections, etc.).

Data Notes and Sources: ¹Includes a weighted sample of public charter and public high school students. Early marijuana users unweighted n=419. Non-early marijuana users unweighted n=3,094. Adapted by CESAR from data from the DC Youth Risk Behavior Survey, DC Public Schools, 2007.

²National Institute on Drug Abuse, *Marijuana: Facts for Teens*. National Institute of Health, 2008.