



# FACTS ABOUT SUBSTANCES



## ALCOHOL

- Alcohol (Ethanol) is one of **most commonly** used substances.
- Alcohol is a **depressant**.
- Alcohol hinders **decision-making skills, balance, and motor-skills**.
- Alcohol is the **most common drug** for people receiving treatment for a **alcohol use disorder or alcohol addiction**.
- Alcohol is the most common substance responsible for **driving under the influence (DUI) crimes**.



## TOBACCO

- Tobacco comes from a **tobacco plant (*Nicotiana tabacum*)**.
- The chemical responsible for the effects of tobacco is called **nicotine**.
- Nicotine is a **stimulant** and can be **smoked or put inside the mouth**.
- Nicotine can cause **loss of appetite, increased heart rate and pressure, sweating, diarrhea, and nausea**.
- Tobacco is found in **cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, pouches**.
- Many products **only use nicotine** such as nicotine pouches or vapes.
- Nicotine can also result in a **nicotine use disorder or nicotine addiction**.

## CANNABIS

- Cannabis, also known as marijuana, is a plant that has **tetrahydrocannabinol (THC)** in various compositions are responsible for the mind-altering component that makes people feel “high”. It also contains **cannabidiol (CBD)**, but it doesn’t have the same effect as THC.
- There are **3 types** of cannabis species, but the main type is ***Cannabis sativa***.
- Cannabis **is not safer than other substances** and can result in **cannabis use disorder or cannabis addiction**.
- Cannabis use can result in **anxiety, paranoia, psychosis, sleep problems, issues with memory, decreased concentration**.

## VAPES

- Vapes, also called e-cigarettes, came about as a **“healthier alternative”** to smoking cigarettes. This is a myth as **vapes are more harmful than cigarettes**.
- By products from vapes as well as vapes themselves are **not safer**.
- Vaping can cause lung damage resulting in **e-cigarette or vaping product use-associated lung injury (EVALI)**.
- Vapes use **pods or cartridges** that contain **nicotine or THC** that is heated up and released as water vapor.
- These pods or cartridges also contain other **chemicals to make it more addictive**.
- E-cigarettes result in a lot of **environmental waste**.

## WHY SHOULD I AVOID USING SUBSTANCES?

### YOUTH

- Your **prefrontal cortex**, the part of the brain important for decision making and behavior, is still developing.
- **Substance use** can make you more vulnerable to a substance use disorder.
- Many substances have chemicals at **varying doses, which can cause poisoning or overdose**.
- Tobacco, Vape, and Marijuana companies **market to kids** to ensure lifelong use to increase customers and profit.

### ADULTS

- Substances can contribute to **many health conditions** such as heart disease, stroke, liver disease, cancer, and diabetes.
- Substances can contribute to lead to **mental health conditions** such as anxiety.
- Pregnant women should avoid using substances during and after pregnancy to avoid **birth defects and complications for the baby**.
- Substance use over time, especially with heavy use, **can result in a substance use disorder**.
- Substances have **varying doses** which can cause **poisoning or overdose**.

### SOURCE:

SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION. “ABOUT SUBSTANCES - ALCOHOL, MARIJUANA, CBD, VAPING, AND OPIOIDS.” SAMHSA.GOV, 2024, WWW.SAMHSA.GOV/SUBSTANCE-USE/LEARN.

