



MARIJUANA..... ITS NOT MEDICINE!

By Roger Morgan, Exec Director, Coalition for a Drug Free California

Smoked marijuana has no accepted medicinal value. Research continues with THC, the main psychoactive element in marijuana. But according to the Federal Drug Administration (FDA), the agency that America has used since 1906 to determine the safety and efficacy of medicines, **smoked marijuana offers no medicinal value.** Certain isolated components of marijuana may have value, but never in smoked form. Marinol, a synthetic THC, is already available in pill form, and research continues to offer sprays, patches and suppositories.

Marijuana can provide relief from pain, aids wasting and nausea but the harms are delivered with the benefit. The harms may not matter to someone on a death bed. For younger people smoking “medical marijuana,” however, they may be inflicting harms on themselves, albeit most are loath to accept the facts.

According to Joseph Califano, Jr., prior Secretary of Health and Human Services, and Chairman and Founder of CASA, *“...For certain individuals with AIDS and the 15% of chemotherapy patients whose nausea is not relieved by currently available medicines, marijuana may have some medicinal value.....because smoked marijuana is a carcinogen and adversely affects the immune system, the IOM (Institute of Medicine) stressed the importance of developing an alternative delivery system, such as an aerosol using synthetic cannabinoids rather than the whole plant, and **disapproved any use of smoked marijuana except by the terminally ill and those with chronic diseases, and even then only under tightly controlled circumstances..... for America’s children and teens, marijuana is a dangerous drug.**”*

According to Dan Brookoff, MD., Ph.D, an oncologist who is certified by the American Board of Internal medicine with a sub specialty Certification in Medical Oncology, *“...**Marijuana is not a medication.**”* He states *“.....marijuana is neither an acceptable medical treatment nor an alternative medical treatment for any illness..... **Marijuana is never the best available treatment for a patient, and that is why it is not a medication.**”* He further states *“...With the therapeutic potential of marijuana eclipsed by safer and more effective drugs, we have come to the conclusion that **there is no therapeutic use for marijuana. All we are left with are the hazards. These include lung disease, cardiac dysfunction, brain damage, genetic damage, immune disorders and psychomotor impairment.**”*

Smokes, crude marijuana has never passed FDA’s tests for safety and efficacy as a medicine. It is a Schedule I drug because it is addictive, harmful and has no accepted medical value. We already have Marinol, a synthetic of THC in pill form that is legally available. Today, however, most Oncologists agree there are better medicines, like Nabilone and Dronabinol. Sativex, a spray developed in the U.K., is close to approval by the FDA for use in the U.S. But smoked marijuana doesn’t medicate anything, and the harms in most cases vastly outweigh any relief.