

Is CHP For or Against Marijuana?

Peter Vogel

Deputy Leader, CHP Canada

Science-based decision-making is a much-touted theme of our current government, but how much do you know about the science of marijuana? Marijuana has two substances that we need to understand: "tetrahydrocannabinol (Δ -THC), the main psychotropic component of marijuana," ("psychotropic" means that it causes hallucinations, and impairment) and cannabidiol (CBD). CBD has at least as many health benefits¹ as marijuana users have been touting but marijuana users tend to have a credibility problem, so most of us are probably skeptical — and besides, even if it has a good side, do we really want to risk impairment to get the benefits?

This is where there is good news. While illegal grow-ops have been hybridizing marijuana to optimize levels of THC, making it far more potent than it previously was², work has also been done to hybridize it in the other direction, so that it has no psychotropic effects.

What would you say to someone who always complained about a pill they were taking irritating their eyes, but then you found out they were grinding the pills up and rubbing them on their face! You would say "you're doing it wrong, read the label!"

There are correct and incorrect ways of taking necessary medication; this applies to medical marijuana as well. The medical hazards of smoking are well-known, and yet there is little condemnation of smoking marijuana; this is bizarre and unbalanced. While it is possible to control pain by smoking marijuana, it is also doing damage to the users' lungs. What is not talked about as much is the fact that pain can be controlled by eating marijuana. I have heard that it tastes awful, but so do some other medications that people take. If people are serious about wanting to improve their health with medical marijuana, they should not be smoking it.

Taken together — not smoking it and not hallucinating or becoming impaired because of it — are you opposed to medical marijuana? Why would you be when you consider that the side effects of alternative pain medications often include addiction and liver damage? Properly administered (not by smoking), medical marijuana is very effective in managing pain and has no harmful side effects; it is not physically addictive.

Medical marijuana is already legal, though it is harder to obtain than many other pain medications; work needs to be done both in the area of education and distribution. We don't want growers to be growing both low and high THC marijuana and legitimately selling medically beneficial marijuana on one hand, while selling high THC marijuana to recreational users on the other hand.

Proper distribution and administration could even reduce the call for physician-assisted suicide because when pain can be reduced and controlled, a patient's outlook on life will generally improve, and they may not want to hasten death. The government could promote this angle, but they don't seem to want to encourage proper pain medication instead of assisted suicide.

Growing and selling high THC marijuana must continue to be illegal. The dangers of impairment must be publicized. Crimes committed while "high" or drunk must not be treated leniently.

Because the federal Liberal government is not talking about these distinctions, their legalization plans are off to a bad start. Our current Prime Minister has smoked recreational marijuana (high in THC)³. He has no moral problem with this behaviour (even though it was illegal at the time). Legalizing it would legitimize his behaviour and also give the government a much better chance of taxing it and reaping the benefits in increased tax revenue⁴.

As with legalized gambling, the social costs will be high and governments will be addicted to the revenues. We need to continue to stand against impairment, both drunkenness and drug-impairment. The message that we are hearing from our culture is that it is OK to be impaired, as long as we don't drive. As Christians, we must not impair our judgment. We must be exemplary in our moderate use of God's gifts to us. Marijuana is one of God's gifts, and like all of His gifts, it can be used properly or abused. Let's be wise in how we condemn its abuse and, also, how we encourage its proper use for those who could benefit from it.

CHP Canada is a wise and balanced Christian voice in our culture. We need YOU to show solidarity by joining⁵ (if you are not a member), supporting us financially⁶, (if you are not already) and encouraging others to take an active, thoughtful role in the Canadian political scene.

Sources

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healthyhempoil.com/cannabidiol/?hvid=3ITmNj

Footnotes

¹ onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1755-5949.2008.00065.x/full

² www.forbes.com/sites/alicegwalton/2015/03/23/pot-evolution-how-the-makeup-of-marijuana-has-changed-over-time/#2715e4857a0b68e01d4e5579

³ globalnews.ca/news/795772/justin-trudeau-says-he-smoked-marijuana/

⁴ www.cbc.ca/news/politics/bill-blair-liberal-marijuana-czar-1.3394240

⁵ www.chp.ca/get-involved

⁶ www.chp.ca/donate

The Christian Heritage Party of Canada

www.chp.ca • NationalOffice@chp.ca • 1-888-VOTE-CHP (868-3247)

PO Box 4958, Station E, Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5J1

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