

Should Marijuana Be Legalized for Medical Purposes?

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Introduction

Marijuana is a drug, among many others, that is mostly used and relied upon by its consumers for mental relief and pleasure. It helps relieve stress, anxiety, and depression and makes one feel good. It provides its users with a means of escape from all of their life problems for a while, where their brain blocks out all of their negative thoughts and lets them experience pleasure for some time. This is the reason why its usage is as common as it is. This also happens to be one of the reasons for its overuse and overdose among many people, which could be extremely dangerous and harmful to health. Marijuana overdose or even addiction can lead to some severe health issues, which is why its consumption is illegal in most parts of the world. However, just like every other thing, marijuana has its advantages along with its dreadful disadvantages. Whether or not its advantages outweigh its disadvantages is arguable and debatable. Still, the fact that it could be used for many different kinds of medical conditions and illnesses cannot be denied.

Unfortunately, the governments of most countries of the world seem to be completely heedless of this fact, which is why they have made its use of any kind prohibited, illegal, and therefore severely punishable. Many medical and health specialists all around the globe have proven and agreed that marijuana could be beneficial for many different kinds of illnesses and facilitate and quicken their treatments. Therefore, in this paper, the argument made is in favor of marijuana becoming legalized. The prospects, consequences, and implications of doing so will be discussed further in the essay. Despite the fact that the legalization of marijuana may result in the development of addictions, injuries, and crimes, it is a cure for many diseases, enhances the economy, and guarantees public safety.

Advantages of Marijuana Legalization

The treatment of various kinds of illnesses by using the unprocessed basic contents of the marijuana plant is termed as “medical marijuana.” (‘Marijuana as Medicine,’ 2017) There have been many arguments made in favor of the legalization of Marijuana for health purposes. Various governmental and non-governmental institutions have conducted some studies to analyze the possible and probable outcomes of doing so. One such study conducted recently in the United States, funded by NIDA, drew a link between the [legalization of marijuana](#) consumption and a decrease in the percentage as well as rates of deaths caused by marijuana overdose. (‘Marijuana as Medicine,’ 2017) Thus, the conclusion

made by using the findings of this study was that marijuana should be legalized for medicinal purposes because it would lead to a decrease in death rates caused by the excess of marijuana. Another advantage related to this point of the legalization of marijuana is the fact that it would cause a complete wipeout of the black market of marijuana. Currently, in many states where marijuana consumption is illegal, people still easily manage to get access to it through someone whom they might not be directly in touch with. This certain someone is obviously involved in the illegal buying and selling of drugs, which sometimes might even mean affiliation with various deadly and extremely dangerous mafia gangs or terrorist groups. This puts them, as well as everyone in touch with them, at high risk. If, however, marijuana is legalized, these risks and dangers would be minimized and somehow would be eliminated. All the people involved in the illegal purchase and smuggling of marijuana would cease to do so because their business would become legitimized and authorized by the state. The 'black market' of marijuana would be completely dismantled. ('12 Pros and Cons of Marijuana Legalization,') Often, a lot of problems are created due to violence and aggression among and between various drug-dealing gangs. Their disputes, more often than not, end up in physical fights that lead to people being seriously injured or even dead. If marijuana becomes legalized, none of these disputes will happen since it would easily be available to everyone, and the cycle of the 'blame game' when/if the police get involved would also be put an end to.

If marijuana consumption is not a crime, the police and various other state institutions, such as the legal bodies and the judiciaries, will also find themselves to be free for other more pressing concerns. They would not have to focus on marijuana-related crimes and, thus, would have the time and space for other, more serious criminal cases, such as those involving murder and rape. It is no surprise that marijuana has been tested and proven to have certain characteristics that give it the ability to deal with certain incurable medical conditions. These include Crohn's disease, Epilepsy, Migraines, side effects of chemotherapy, and to a certain extent, cancer itself. Legalizing marijuana consumption would mean that people who suffer from any of these conditions would get easy access to it. Moreover, it would result in a much more improved overall health state of the population. This might also help to reduce the burden on the healthcare services provided by the state to the public.

Medical Advantages of Marijuana

As has been mentioned and discussed above, marijuana has a lot of advantages which means that there are a lot of reasons why it should be legalized. But, out of all of its advantages, perhaps the most important one is that regarding health and medical treatments. First and foremost, marijuana is known to facilitate and speed up weight loss. People often smoke weed in an attempt to lose weight. This means that if it gets legalized and people have easy access to it, more and more people will consume it and thus lose weight. This greatly reduces the chances of gaining weight and becoming obese. Obesity is a huge problem, especially for the current generation due to the availability of all kinds of unhealthy and fattening foods. Many other health problems follow from obesity such as heart attacks, artery contraction, blood pressure, diabetes, etc. If the solution to a health problem that leads to all of these serious medical conditions is as simple as smoking weed, it is pretty surprising

that it is still illegal in most countries of the world. ('7 really surprising health benefits from smoking cannabis,' 2016) It has also been found out, through various kinds of medical teams upon conducting medical research and agreed upon by doctors from all over the world that marijuana can shrink the size of and impede the growth and reproduction of cancer cells in the human body. So far, success in impeding cancer cell growth has been seen only in experimental setups. The (potential) treatment has not yet been conducted on any real patient. However, work and research are still being conducted, and discoveries are made daily. If doctors and medical experts find a way for marijuana to deal with, if not cure, cancer, it would be a huge milestone to have been achieved. The legalization of marijuana would almost be inevitable then, and if the government still does not agree to do so, it would just be absurd.

Many kinds of drugs can cause severe harm and risks to the body; alcohol and heroin are the most common among them. A study was conducted by Columbia University in which the researchers observed and supervised the patients undergoing rehabilitation procedures to give up drug usage. As shocking as it sounds, it was discovered that smoking weed helped the patients give up and reduce their consumption of dangerous opiates. Those patients who were known to be smoking weed were found to be able to sleep better and be able to deal with their anxiety issues much more efficiently as compared to those patients who did not. The researchers working on this study also found out that the patients who were mainly given marijuana by their doctors were able to deal much more easily and conveniently with withdrawal symptoms. ('7 really surprising health benefits from smoking cannabis,' 2016)

The most commonly heard counter-argument against the legalization of marijuana is that marijuana is still a drug to which people can and, in fact, do get addicted. Cases of marijuana addiction have, so far, been very rare, but the many different health problems that it has the potential to cause can, under no circumstances, be ignored. Marijuana consumption can potentially harm the lungs. Moreover, it can damage a layer of cells that surrounds all of the human body organs. The sheet of these cells becomes thin as marijuana is smoked and this can interrupt the smooth functioning of the particular body organ. Organs such as the heart and lungs are primarily threatened by marijuana. Furthermore, marijuana is constituted of 50 percent to around 70 percent of many different kinds and categories of hydrocarbons. This percentage is a lot more than that commonly found in cigarettes. Despite the fact that marijuana is relatively safer and healthier as compared to other drugs, it still has a lot of disadvantages which, if not taken seriously enough, could lead to significant problems.

Legalization of marijuana can thus, increase all of these risks mentioned above. This side of the argument also makes a lot of sense, and the place where these arguments are coming from is also understandable. However, certain facts disprove the validity of such claims and thus render these arguments weak. For example, it has been found through various studies and surveys that, in the regions and states in which marijuana usage has been legalized, a lot of progress regarding health improvement has been seen ever since this decision was passed by legislation. Not just physical but mental health problems have also sharply declined. Moreover, suicide rates, as well as the rates of death caused by drug overdose, have also been drastically reduced. ('Legalizing Marijuana Decreases

Fatal Opiate Overdose, Study Shows, 2017)

Conclusion

Marijuana happens to be a drug, a fact that is undeniable. Moreover, it, like all things, has pros and cons. However, through the discussion presented above along with the main points stated by both sides and positions of the argument, it has been made very clear that the advantages of marijuana legalization outweigh its disadvantages. The fact that legalization of marijuana can cause unlimited usage of it widespread all across is understandable. Still, at the same time, it must also be noted that marijuana production, consumption, and purchase all would happen under the control and supervision of the government and various bodies appointed by it. Thus, things would not get out of hand as one might expect them to, as is evident from the examples of those regions where its consumption has been made legal.

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