







# Pot and Driving FACTS

## What are the effects of pot?

Smoking pot (also known as 'grass'; 'weed'; hash; marijuana; cannabis) has negative effects, including:

- Reduced ability to concentrate and learn
- Reduced memory
- Slower reaction

## How does pot affect driving?

A driver who is high takes longer to react to sudden events, like a snowmobile or Honda coming around a corner at high speed.

Pot can cause a driver to have a reduced or 'drifting' attention span, making it harder to concentrate on driving.

Pot can also cause a driver to focus too much on certain aspects of driving and forget about others that are important.

Pot changes a driver's sense of time and distance, making it harder to judge distances while driving.

## Does driving high increase the risk of being in a crash?

Your driving ability can be impaired by pot and this impairment can have real consequences for you and your passengers. If you drive high you have a greater chance of being injured or injuring someone else.

## How does the strength of the pot affect driving?

Like alcohol, the effect of pot on driving depends on the amount and strength of the pot a person has smoked. This can make a big difference to a person's driving.

## **How long is a driver affected after they smoke pot?**

The effects of pot on driving skills are strongest during the first hour after smoking. After that the effects decrease quite rapidly. The effects will increase if a person smokes up for a longer time, has more to smoke and smokes strong pot before driving.

## **Does 'burnout' affect driving?**

Some people feel very tired a few hours after getting high. This is called 'burnout'. A driver who is tired is at greater risk of being involved in a crash.

## **If you mix pot and alcohol, what do you get?**

When you drink alcohol and smoke pot together the effect is different than when you use them separately. Mixing pot and alcohol can have a big effect on your driving and it can put you and your passengers at serious risk.

## **When it comes to driving, how does pot compare to alcohol?**

Alcohol is still the number one danger for drivers, their passengers or anyone else in the community. Studies show that alcohol impairs driving differently and usually more severely than pot, but that doesn't mean it's safe to drive high.

## **If a drug is used as a medicine, can it affect driving?**

Pot is sometimes used as a medicine. That doesn't mean it's safe to smoke pot and drive. Pot isn't the only drug that affects driving. Many legal drugs come with warnings not to drive for a certain amount of time after taking them for this reason.

## **Do you need more information?**

For more information about pot and its effects, visit the Pot and Driving Campaign website at [www.potanddriving.cpha.ca](http://www.potanddriving.cpha.ca). Also visit the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse website at [www.ccsa.ca](http://www.ccsa.ca). On the Welcome page, select language to enter the site. On the Home page, click on 'CCSA Publications'. From the publications list, select 'FAQ's' and then select 'Cannabis'.

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