

Daily Cannabis Use in the US Increases 15-Fold Over Three Decades

In a significant shift over the past three decades, self-reported daily or near-daily cannabis use in the United States has surged from 0.9 million individuals in 1992 to a staggering 17.7 million people today, according to figures from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health. This represents a 15-fold increase in the per capita rate.

Last month, President Biden announced plans to reclassify cannabis from a Schedule I to a Schedule III drug. The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) states that Schedule III drugs have “a moderate to low potential” for addiction and harm.

‘Mirror Changes in Policy’

Professor Jonathan Caulkins, who authored the report, highlighted the considerable rise in actual cannabis use, noting that “high-frequency cannabis use is now more commonly reported than high-frequency drinking.” Caulkins, an expert in drug policy, observed that these trends reflect policy changes, suggesting that cannabis use is now on a fundamentally different scale compared to the pre-legalization era.

Responding to the findings, psychiatry professor Dr. Davoid Gorelick warned that frequent cannabis use “increases the risk of developing cannabis-associated psychosis.”

Currently, cannabis is legal for recreational use in 24 states and the District of Columbia.

Dangers

A US report published in 2022 demonstrated that cannabis users have an increased risk of developing atrial fibrillation, a condition related to stroke, by as much as 35 percent. Additionally, a French study from last year revealed that nearly ten percent of patients admitted to intensive cardiac care units tested positive for cannabis. Danish-funded research has also found strong evidence that young men who regularly use cannabis are at a significant risk of developing schizophrenia.

President Biden’s announcement on Twitter underscored the administration’s intent to reclassify marijuana under federal law, aiming to address the broader societal impacts of previous marijuana policies.

As the nation grapples with the evolving landscape of cannabis use and its implications, these findings and policy changes mark a pivotal moment in the ongoing debate over marijuana regulation and public health.

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