

Educative outcome	At the end of this session students will be able to identify a range of impacts of cannabis use, and classify them as psychological, biological or social, understanding that cannabis can impact an individual's health in multiple ways
Task	Students are provided with cards containing information on the impacts of cannabis use and must classify them as biological, social or psychological
Duration	Flexible. 30 to 50 minutes
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worksheets 1-3: possible impact cards for students, cut up and shuffled • Worksheet 5: information and answers for teachers, printed and on hand • Worksheet 4: student worksheet (optional)

Introduction:

Explain that the aim of this activity is to help students accurately identify possible biological, psychological and social impacts of cannabis use.

Introduce the bio-psycho-social model of health and the interaction between a person's physical, mental and social state on their overall wellbeing. These can be written up on a white board and discussed. For example:

Biological	Psychological	Social
Physical and physiological responses. For example, decreased heart rate	Feelings, emotions, thoughts and behaviours. For example, feeling sad and crying	Interactions with others, relationships, legal issues, work, school, sport etc. For example, being part of a football team

Teachers explain that cannabis can affect the body, mind and social life of an individual.

Activity:

- Divide the class into small groups
- Provide each group with a set of symptom cards (note: the cards for printing attached are sorted into biological, psychological and social tables – they need to be printed and shuffled)
- Ask students to group the symptom cards into biological, psychological and social. Explain that some may fit into more than one category
- Students can use the table in worksheet 4 to place their symptom cards
- Once students have classified their cards, ask them to rank the symptoms in terms of which they feel are most serious, through to least serious

Summary and concluding remarks:

- Whole of class discussion and reflections. Cannabis affects different people in many different ways. Sometimes these affects are hard to predict.

Possible questions:

- What did you hear today that was new to you?
- Which impact do you think is the most concerning?

Alternatives

- Read out (randomly) each of the symptoms and ask students to classify them as biological, psychological or social (this can be done moving around the room or through discussion)

Extensions

- Ask students to classify the cards further into short- and long-term symptoms



Worksheet 4: Student worksheet

1. Place your symptom cards where you think they fit best.

Tip: Remember, cannabis affects different people in different ways and can even affect the same person in different ways.

Biological impacts <i>Physical and physiological responses. For example, decreased heart rate</i>	Psychological impacts <i>Feelings, emotions, thoughts and behaviours. For example, feeling sad and crying</i>	Biological impacts <i>Interactions with others, relationships, legal issues, work, school, sport etc. For example, being part of a football team</i>

2. Rank your symptom cards in the order you think is most serious to least serious



Key messages for communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using cannabis can have unwanted physical, social and emotional consequences. These can be immediate, short- or long-term • Age of first use, quantity used and frequency of use strongly influence long-term patterns of use, health outcomes and potential dependence • Cannabis is illegal in Australia
Activity Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This activity encourages students to identify the multiple affects cannabis can have on a person's health. It extends to discussing consequences of these impacts in the short- and long-term. Students can develop a more detailed understanding of how cannabis works in the body and explore psychological and social impacts as well

For more information please access these NCPIC fact sheets and other resources

- [Impacts of cannabis use for young people](#)
- [Cannabis and Mental Health](#)
- [Cannabis and Aggression](#)
- [Cannabinoids and appetite](#)
- [Cannabis and sport](#)
- [Cannabis and motivation](#)
- [Cannabis information](#) – including short and long-term effects



Answer sheet and information for teachers

	Biological impacts <i>Physical and physiological responses. For example, decreased heart rate</i>	Psychological impacts <i>Feelings, emotions, thoughts and behaviours. For example, feeling sad and crying</i>	Biological social impacts <i>Interactions with others, relationships, legal issues, work, school, sport etc. For example, being part of a football team</i>
Short-term and immediate effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • drowsiness • decreased nausea • increased appetite • loss of co-ordination • bloodshot eyes • dryness of the eyes, mouth and throat • slower reaction times • changes in heart rate and blood pressure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feeling of well-being • quiet and reflective mood • anxiety or panic attacks • feelings of paranoia • some loss of concentration problem-solving ability and short-term memory • affected perception including sound, colour and other sensations • altered perception of time • confusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • talkativeness • laughter • feeling of well-being • loss of inhibitions • disagreements and frustration over drug use can cause family arguments and affect personal relationships
Long-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased risk of respiratory diseases associated with smoking • increased risk of cancers • a chronic cough, wheeze • shortness of breath • chronic bronchitis • increased risk of cannabis dependence • possible reduced fertility in both men and women • an increased risk of low birth weight babies, or possible birth defects, if cannabis is used during pregnancy • possible impact on the immune system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decreased memory and learning abilities • decreased motivation in areas such as study, work or concentration • increased risk of psychotic symptoms, especially if the person has a history of psychotic illness, such as schizophrenia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decreased motivation or energy to accomplish tasks • poor school or work performance • family and relationship problems • legal problems - cannabis and its use are illegal, so users may come to the attention of police, and receive fines and criminal convictions • financial problems - from buying cannabis, or paying fines/fees