

**I. Background information - medical marijuana (Latin name: Cannabis)**

- a. Legal in 14 states for medical purposes (including CA)
  - 1. still illegal according to federal law → considered a Schedule I (dangerous) drug
  - 2. federal law enforcement unclear in states with legalized medical marijuana
- b. Sold in state-approved dispensaries
  - 1. doctor's prescription required
  - 2. may be smoked or eaten
- c. Used for treating various medical problems:-
  - 1. Cancer
  - 2. HIV; AIDS
  - 3. Multiple Sclerosis
  - 4. Glaucoma
  - 5. Arthritis

**Transition:** Now that I've given you some background about medical marijuana, let's find out why there is opposition to it. Here are some of the arguments against the legalization of marijuana for medical use. *Aljaid Lallakli*

**II. Arguments against medical marijuana (MM)**

- a. Not enough scientific data to prove its medical benefits
  - 1. other drugs on the market just as effective as MM
  - 2. may have side effects → increased heart rate; decreased blood pressure
  - 3. If smoked → may cause lung problems and weakened immune system
- b. Other dangers associated with MM
  - 1. MM stimulates 'dopamine' reaction → (pleasure transmitter) in brain → causes addiction
  - 2. Connected with high % of car crashes and workplace accidents
  - 3. Considered a "gateway" drug to harder drugs
  - 4. Easier for teens to get a hold of marijuana if dispensaries are located near schools and parks

**Transition:** As you can see, there are some reasonable arguments against medical marijuana. *YKKK* However, many doctors, and medical researchers are in favor of medical marijuana. Let's hear what they have to say about this issue.

**III. Arguments in favor of medical marijuana**

- a. *American College of Physicians believe:* MM should not be classified by federal government as a Schedule I drug
- b. Evidence proves marijuana effective as pain reliever
  - 1. less toxic and less addictive than other prescribed drugs
  - 2. approved by *former U.S. Surgeon general* for pain
- c. Use of MM under doctor's care
  - 1. just like other prescribed drugs → patient should not drive, operate machinery, etc.
  - 2. use of MM is controlled
- d. Research shows health risks are low
  - 1. no reported cases of lung cancer or emphysema (lung disease)
  - 2. research shows improved immune function & weight gain in AIDS patients
  - 3. from studies of AIDS patients: benefits outweigh risks
- e. No evidence to show that legalizing MM leads to increased teen marijuana use