

manage my sleep problem is to make sure that I am very active during the day, preferably with some sort of cardio workout. I also try very hard to limit my caffeine intake, taking extra care to not drink any after 5 pm. I will take melatonin when I am having an extraordinarily hard time sleeping and I am under pressure to have to be up in the morning. However, I am reluctant to go this route because I don't like taking any type of medication if I can avoid it, and I seem to wake up a little foggy in the morning. For me, the sleep issues are the most intense for the first 1-2 weeks and will gradually start to subside after that.

During this entire period of sleep struggles, I start experiencing the most lucid dreams that I have ever had. While I am in my marijuana addiction, I do not usually notice my lack of dreams, but it always becomes abundantly clear once I start to cleanse my body of the THC. These dreams can be extremely vivid and seem so realistic that I have woken up in panics filled with fear and depression.

Additionally, depression and anxiety often plague me in the early days of detox. I think this is a result of a combination of my chemical dependency on THC and also the absolute need to change people, places, and things to successfully abstain from my drug of choice. I relate this to the grieving process, but it is just something that has to be done. I find that practicing acceptance and gratitude helps my depression and anxiety, while always remembering that acceptance is the answer to ALL of my problems today. This really is a simple program for difficult people. If I really dedicate myself to the program, including the fellowship, the Steps, and service, these unpleasant detox symptoms dissipate within 1-2 weeks. It also helped me to learn about PAWS (Post-Acute Withdrawal Syndrome). With the insane strength and power of modern marijuana, and its derivatives, it helped me a lot to learn that some of these psychological symptoms could last for up to 24 months. I found that physical exercises, prayer, and meditation helped me with these symptoms tremendously through all stages of detox!

The final detox symptom that I routinely experience is changes in my appetite and eating habits. Early in my detox, it usually manifests as a lack of appetite and eating. For the first week or two without pot, I just don't seem to have the desire and excitement to eat and consume beverages the way that I do while under the influence of marijuana. This lack of nutrition also impacts the above symptoms of sleep, depression, and anxiety. So it is important to find some sort of food or nutritional supplement that provides the nutrients my body requires for the tough job of physical and mental recovery. As I get further into the detox process, I find myself eating and drinking more than usual and beyond what my body needs, which can often lead to unexpected weight

gain or other body changes. Physical exercise, especially cardiovascular workouts, really helped me manage some of these changes. Thank you for taking the time to read about some of the difficulties that I had while detoxing from marijuana. These are merely my experiences, yours may differ.

Marijuana Detox: Ride it Out; It's Worth the Price of Admission

I can tell you a bit about detox from Marijuana. I've detoxed a few times now with varying intensity. For me the mildest of the detoxes usually involved night sweats, general anxiety, loss of appetite, and trouble sleeping. Symptoms peaked at around 3-5 days of sobriety and lingered for two weeks to a month. These detoxes occurred after fairly heavy marijuana use (2g-6g daily), smoking flower that maxed out at 30% THC.

My worst detoxes have all involved concentrates (shatter, wax, live resin, etc.). I found the detox from concentrates to be more severe than I would have ever imagined. At my peak usage, I was consuming around 2g daily of concentrates averaging 80%-90% THC. The two worst experiences were both when I quit cold turkey after using to this extent. I found that after about 48 hours of sobriety I could not eat some things without becoming violently ill. For example, on day three of detox I tried to eat a few slices of bread and butter in the morning and was hit with intense nausea and an upset stomach that left me sprawled out on my bathroom floor. Along with the nausea and what I would call flu-like symptoms (vomiting, diarrhea, body temperature irregularity), there was intense anxiety and a huge desire to smoke to alleviate the symptoms.

The worst of the sickness, for me, peaked at around 72 hours of sobriety. I found avoiding fats was helpful for minimizing nausea. When eating low-fat food, my body did not react as violently, and the nausea was mostly mitigated. There is good news! The symptoms do subside if you can ride them out. In my experience, at around day five symptoms settled down significantly.

I won't lie to you, these detoxes sucked pretty bad. I wish I would have avoided detoxing cold turkey from concentrates; I don't recommend it. But if you're in the same boat I was in, it will pass, and the rewards waiting for you on the other side are worth the price of admission.

About Marijuana Detox—Member Stories



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Introduction

These are some personal stories of detox written by members of Marijuana Anonymous. The purpose of this pamphlet is to carry the message of recovery to the marijuana addict who still suffers, particularly anyone who fears detox or is currently experiencing it. These stories are as unique as those who wrote them. We can't predict anyone's detox symptoms, and we suggest you refer to the About Marijuana Detox pamphlet. Here are their stories...

Even If You Don't Think You Notice a Difference, Every Day You Stay Sober Gets Better

Getting clean was a hard time for me, like really hard. I couldn't sleep. I had constant nightmares, and the nerves in my neck were always on edge. I also had strong urges to smoke all the time, and my mind felt like it was spinning a million miles a minute. It was definitely a bad show.

You could imagine my relief when I heard that I was not the only one that suffered from these things. My fellow newcomers experienced many, if not all, the symptoms I was experiencing. My sponsor chuckled and recalled how it had been exactly the same for them. Annoyed, I asked, "How long until it got better?" My sponsor told me, "It gets better every day you stay sober, even if you don't think you notice a difference." Darn, I had to stay sober now! But that was the problem: I couldn't string together more than a few weeks of sobriety at a time, and that meant starting over with my detox symptoms every time I relapsed.

After a while, I started asking a different question: How do I get sober and stay sober? That's when the solution outlined in the Steps began working for me. Focusing on the suffering from my detox symptoms didn't do me any favors. The longer I stayed sober, the better my symptoms got. One day I realized I didn't have to worry about things like getting sleep or obsessive thoughts about pot. Thanks to working the Steps, while being supported by my sponsor, I managed to string together more sobriety than ever before. It turns out I just had to turn my attention to the solution and run toward it!

Prayers Help Almost Immediately

When I first got sober, I experienced a lot of the typical physical side effects of detox. I would sweat more than normal, and I didn't have as much of an appetite. I had noticeably more unchanneled energy, and I had a hard time sleeping. Every time I became conscious of these

side effects, I would stop what I was doing and channel all of my energy and focus into reciting the First and Third Step prayers. Almost immediately, these prayers would help.

Over time, the frequency that I experienced these uncomfortable side effects diminished, until after about six to eight weeks, I didn't feel them at all. More recently, I have been noticing what I identify as the mental and spiritual side effects of detox: anxiety, nervousness, and discontent. I believe I am feeling these things more now because I am no longer numbing myself from them through the use and abuse of substances. I continue to turn to prayer for solace, and every time I humbly ask for help, my higher power provides.

I've just started Step Four with my sponsor. Through the first three Steps I have gained a stronger connection and trust in my higher power. I'm looking forward to continuing to build this trust and faith through the Steps and to cleaning house to draw myself nearer to God's will. Through this, I can already feel the psychic and spiritual change awakening in me as I transition from restless, irritable, and discontent to happy, joyous, and free.

I Just Kept Repeating the Mantra, "One Day At a Time," and After a While, I Started to Feel Better

When I first quit smoking weed, I thought there would be some discomfort and general unpleasantness. What actually happened was about two to three weeks of pure misery. I experienced major headaches, body aches, insomnia, and just a general feeling of, "I can't do this." However, since I had been getting high for over three decades, I knew I couldn't continue on that path.

I made up my mind to accept the state I was in, and knew it couldn't last forever. Over the years, I had been able to stop using pot, but always replaced the weed with alcohol or some other substance. This time I had no other drugs to ease the detox from marijuana, because I went to an outpatient program four nights a week and attended a Saturday night MA meeting.

I got a sponsor right away and listened to their suggestions. Exercising a lot helped, long hot showers helped, eating healthy helped, listening and sharing at meetings helped, and guess what... I was still pretty damn miserable for about three weeks.

I just kept repeating the mantra, "One Day at a Time." After a while, I did start to feel better. I thought to myself, "I can do this." I knew I couldn't go back and start using again. That was not an option. I had done so much damage to my mind, body, and spirit that my only hope was being in recovery.

That was over 12 years ago, and even though that period of my life was very difficult and painful, I am so grateful for it. Today, I get to live a life with hope and wonder, and experience all of life's joys and sorrows without being in any kind of drug-induced haze. It's a wonderful thing, and I highly recommend it.

If It Weren't For My Sponsor and My MA Group, It Would Have Been Too Much to Handle

At first I felt like I was in a horrible fog that wouldn't go away. That lasted about a week or two. Then the feelings came back. Emotions returned that I had been suppressing for years. If it weren't for my sponsor and my MA group, it would have been too much to handle. Once the fog lifted, I still was not able to handle my feelings well. That is where working the Steps came in. Now, years later, I give all of those problems to my higher power, and life goes much more smoothly.

Addiction Is Heavy and Demanding; Recovery Is Light and Liberating

I felt like I needed to stop using, but I was terrified of spending the rest of my life without marijuana. I got on my knees to ask whatever God there may be to help me, and I immediately felt released from the weight of craving marijuana. I wanted to keep and enhance this new freedom, so I threw myself wholeheartedly into the program: get a sponsor, read the literature, work the Steps, go to meetings, be of service. In the beginning of my sobriety, my life was such a mess that I couldn't tell the difference between the symptoms of detox and the symptoms of living in spiritual bankruptcy for so long. Rather than hearing a loud, booming voice from heaven, the solutions would appear through a chance remark made by a friend, a visit to the doctor, the discovery of a book on healing the body, or even learning to ballroom dance. Addiction is heavy and demanding. Recovery is light and liberating.

Detoxing from Marijuana

Unfortunately, I have had the experience of detoxing from marijuana many times. I was a tough case with an extremely hard head, so it takes me a long time to learn even the simplest of lessons. I can speak with confidence on what my separation from the use of marijuana experiences have been. One constant withdrawal symptom I experience is difficulty sleeping. I have tried many methods to manage this symptom ranging from other addictive behaviors to more holistic/spiritual solutions. The first thing I do to