

Evidence linking marijuana and risk of stroke grows

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Smoking marijuana may increase your chances of having a stroke, according to a review of 34 different studies published in the American Heart Association's journal *Stroke*.

Researchers found a link between [marijuana](#) use and stroke in a total of 64 [stroke patients](#) (80 percent men, average age 32). They also found:

- 81 percent of the stroke patients suffered a stroke or mini-stroke within 24 hours following marijuana use.
- About one in four stroke patients suffered another stroke after repeated marijuana use.
- Half of those who had stroke also had other stroke risk factors—most commonly tobacco or alcohol use.
- Three quarters of the patients (48 out of 64) underwent toxicological analysis for common street drugs; results were positive for drugs other than marijuana in only two cases.

It's "striking" that more strokes are not seen given the broad use of marijuana by the general public, researchers said. They suggest this may be due to

variations in dosage, frequency of use, strength of marijuana, person's genetic makeup and other drugs taken along with the marijuana.

It is also possible that patients don't tell their doctors that they have used marijuana or that the exposure is overlooked.

Since recent studies support a link between marijuana use and stroke; doctors need to be aware of this association especially when dealing with younger stroke patients who may reuse marijuana after stroke.

Provided by American Heart Association

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