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**TESTIMONY
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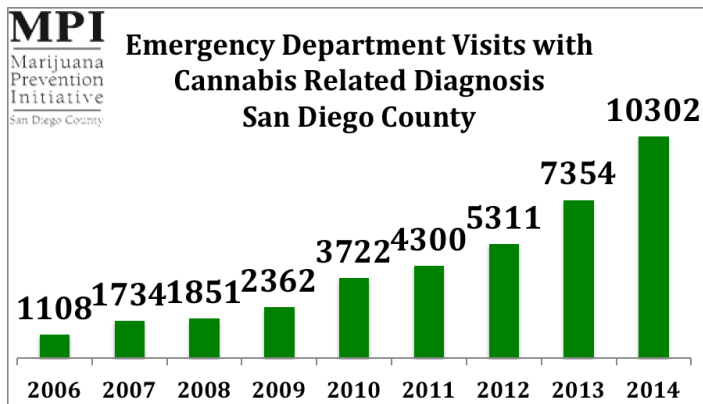
I have been practicing emergency medicine in San Diego for 28 years.

They say the entire world is a stage and people in the emergency department have the front seat. Working on the opioid epidemic for the past 7 years, I realized the link to marijuana.

I would like to share with you what marijuana looks like in the emergency department and what marijuana looks like in the morgue.

Every day in California we treat patients for marijuana poisoning. Every day.

The number of emergency visits for marijuana related diagnosis has gone up by 830% from 2006 to 2014. That's 1,108 people to 10,302 people a year in San Diego alone.



Picture a 25-year-old woman with loud audible retching who is writhing in abdominal pain. We can hear her agony from across the emergency department. We termed the condition, "scromiting." Scromiting is screaming and vomiting, and the hallmark for cannabis hyperemesis syndrome. She has been to numerous emergency departments, was receiving Dilaudid - a strong opioid each time, was exposed to multiple CT scans and radiation, and yet she could not understand why she was so sick. Her cure, would be simple. Stop smoking weed. The problem is that her marijuana addiction was also becoming an opioid addiction.

Every day we treat cases of screaming.

My next patient is spitting and thrashing about, he is sweating and his blood pressure is up. It takes 6 strong people to hold him down until the sedatives take effect. The diagnosis can be anything. But his drug test comes back with just marijuana. Just marijuana.

It was just marijuana that landed another patient on life support in the ICU hanging between life and death. He was inhaling a marijuana concentrate which was 90-100% THC.

Tourists beware. Recently I treated a man who was visiting our beautiful city for a convention. He came to the ER with concern that he couldn't talk right and that his right arm wasn't working. I did all the evaluation to make sure he did not have a stroke. When everything came out normal, he showed me a small package of gummy bears that was labeled "Hangover Remedy." He received a very expensive diagnosis of marijuana poisoning.

It was heart breaking for me to treat an elderly man who traveled to our Scripps institute for a second opinion for his cancer diagnosis. His son saw a prominent advertisement and was hoping the marijuana brownie would help nausea from chemotherapy. The father's nausea was not better, and I admitted him to the hospital for chest pain and palpitations because of the pot brownie.

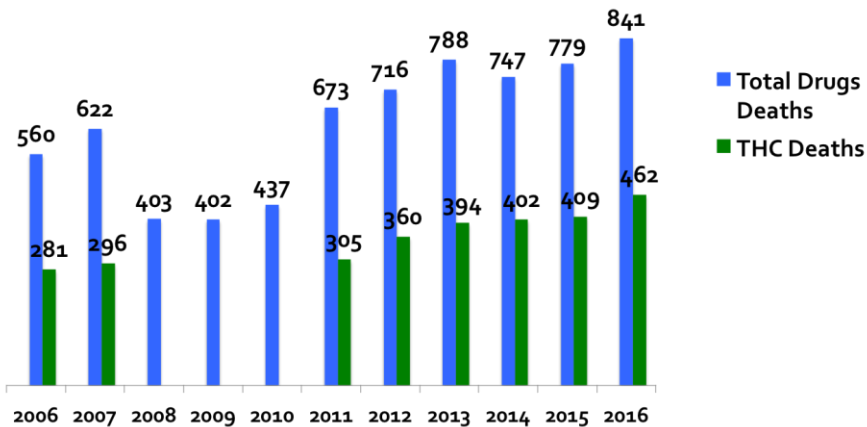
A 3-car collision closed our freeways for a few hours as the driver admitted to being high on marijuana. But this case will not enter any statistic, because no one died.

And what does our medical examiner see?

Deaths from all drugs in the past 10 years went up by 56%. (2006-2016) At the same time deaths with THC went up by 64%.

There is a direct association with increased drug deaths and marijuana deaths. We cannot turn a blind eye to the correlation between marijuana and other drugs.

Number of Patients with Drug Related Deaths



So who dies of marijuana? The San Diego marijuana death diaries counted 462 people who died with THC in their system in 2016. For example they were a:

- 1 year old baby
- 15 year old
- 19 year old driver - along with 31 other drivers
- 55 year old motorcyclist - along with 9 other motorcyclists
- 21 year old who jumped off a bridge - along with 76 other suicides
- 55 year old with hypertension - along with 63 cardiac deaths

Marijuana Death Diaries - 2016

- 1 year old - undetermined
- 15 year old - undetermined
- 19 year old - lost control of vehicle, struck tree (32 Drivers)
- 21 year old - jumped off bridge - suicide (76 suicides)
- 34 year old - fall while hiking - accident
- 55 year old - motorcycle rider struck embankment, (9 MCA)
- 23 year old - with pneumonia - natural
- 50 year old - struck by car (pedestrians) - accident
- 69 year old - with heart disease - natural
- 24 year old - with seizure - natural
- 38 year old - electrocuted - accident
- 54 year old - with hypertension - natural
- 34 year old - stabbed to death - homicide (23 homicides)
- 52 year old - with COPD/emphysema - natural
- 33 year old - sudden cardiac death, history of diabetes, - natural
- 42 year old - riding bicycle, hit car, - accident
- 47 year old - with diabetic ketoacidosis, - natural
- 22 year old - skateboard into car, - accident
- 61 year old - hemopericardium, - natural



Marijuana is associated with a 3-fold risk of death from hypertension; and association with heart attacks. If you have high blood pressure or heart disease, you should not smoke weed.

THC was involved with 29 % of all homicides; 30 % of illicit drug deaths; 30 % of prescription deaths; 30 % of alcohol deaths

If THC was really a medication, the FDA would have a big black box warning.

The green political wave on marijuana is placing profit over people, profit over public health. Marijuana legalization in California has unleashed a public health disaster. Don't do the same in Vermont. Don't expand Vermont medical Marijuana to a law which covers all entities, All of the above examples came from California when a law like the one you are contemplating was in place."

References

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