

Text of a letter by Dr. Nicholas Pace

Dear Senator:

Thank you for the kindness of your reply regarding my concerns about smoking medical marijuana. Unfortunately, As a physician who has studied this drug for three decades, I believe your have been mislead about the merits of smoking marijuana.

First of all we already have legally available oral THC for medical use for the nausea of chemotherapy in the form of pill call Marinol. Smoking the drug is extremely toxic to the lungs because of the 421 toxic chemicals in its smoke. It burns at a higher burn temperature than nicotine making it 5 times stronger than a tobacco cigarette. The user holds it in longer in the lungs than tobacco and it has been shown to cause severe airway lung disease.

I have attached my chapter in the text of Marijuana and Medicine for your review. I have also attached below four recently published research papers that show that the drug causes severe brain damage, lung disease, increased symptoms in Multiple Sclerosis, as well as severe psychiatric symptoms. There is increased incidence of testicular cancer in males who are heavy users. As for pain relief, it has as much pain relief as two tablespoons of over-the-counter cough medicine.

Unfortunately some well meaning legislators have been influenced by the wealthy lobbying group the Drug Policy Foundation...and many do not realize that the legitimate medical profession opposes its use because of smoked marijuana's toxicity.

I have made a partial list of professional medical organizations that are opposed to smoking medical marijuana: the New York Society of Addiction Medicine, the American Medical Association, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, the American Glaucoma Society, the American Academy of Ophthalmology, the American Cancer Society, the National Eye Institute, the National Institute for Neurological Disorders and Stroke, and the American Society of Addiction Medicine.

Please also be aware of the increase in teen admissions to addiction treatment hospitals in New York for marijuana addiction because of the promotion for medical marijuana. The kids say since it is used as medicine it must be safe to use recreationally.

Below are some abstracts of some recent scientific research papers:

- Smoking cannabis was associated with a dose-related impairment of large airways function resulting in airflow obstruction
- Inhaled cannabis is associated with impaired mentation in patients with multiple sclerosis especially to cognition
- Modulation of mediotemporal and ventrostriatal function in humans byTHC: a neural effects of on learning and psychosis.
- Regional brain abnormalities associated with long-term heavy cannabis use.
- Chapter 69 by DR Pace from text Marijuana and Medicine.

Senator Krueger, I am one of your long-time supporters. I know you are usually on the right side of most issues. But I believe it is a mistake to promote smoking this drug for medical reasons. If you still believe that there is some value to the Duane Smoking Marijuana Bill, at least eliminate the inhalation or smoking of the drug, especially since we already legally have the oral form available.

Thank again for your response to my last letter. I know you are a concerned Legislator.

Dr. Nicholas Pace

Clinical Associate Professor Of Medicine
New York University School of Medicine