

Brief Brief Interventions

PATIENT: "I am doing really well in school and I play 3 sports. Marijuana is not impacting me. Everyone should leave me alone about it."

PCP: "I am glad to hear that you are doing well. Sometimes marijuana affects people gradually and they might not even notice some of the early signs. I would like you to learn a little bit more about marijuana and its impact on the brain so you have really good information."

PATIENT: "Literally everyone I know vapes."

PCP: "Vaping has definitely become popular, just like smoking was back in the 1970's. The tobacco industry is at it again! Unfortunately, the chemicals in vapes and the nicotine can be really bad for your body and brain."

PATIENT: "My caregivers are making a really big deal out of nothing."

PCP: "I know it can be annoying, but a caregiver's job is to worry about their kids. Why do you think your folks are so concerned?"

PATIENT: "They didn't grow up with marijuana and they just don't know a lot about it."

PCP: "Your caregivers may have heard that marijuana can interfere with brain development. What have you heard about that? One of the things we do here is teach kids more about that. And by the way, I know sometimes things can get really tense between kids and caregivers on this topic. I would be happy to speak to your caregivers as well to see if we can straighten things out a bit."

PATIENT: "Marijuana use isn't really a problem for me; I can control it. My real issue is my anxiety and marijuana [is the only thing that] actually helps my anxiety."

PCP: "Dealing with anxiety can be very difficult and finding things that can provide some relief is very appealing. Using marijuana may actually make you feel less anxious in the moment, but is likely not treating your anxiety. In fact, you may be creating a cycle for yourself that is making the problem worse. As people use marijuana over time, often they end up needing a larger amount and to use more frequently to get the same effect. In addition, after continued use when someone is not under the influence, his or her anxiety is worse. This creates a difficult cycle and doesn't feel like good treatment. I would be happy to discuss with you some other options that might be more effective to treat your anxiety."

OR

PCP: "I hear that you don't feel your marijuana use is a problem but that your anxiety is a real concern. Often, talking to someone can really help to deal with anxiety. I would be happy to give you some names and contact information for people you could talk with about your anxiety."

PATIENT: "I have done a lot of research on marijuana and I think society has it all wrong. It is a natural substance and it is definitely safer to use than other things, including alcohol, which is legal."

PCP: "It sounds like you are really working hard to be informed. There is definitely a lot of information to be found on this topic. As your healthcare provider, I can only give you the best scientific information I have at the moment. I would like to share with you what I know, so that you can consider all information as you make choices."

PATIENT: "I only drink once or twice a month. Most of my friends drink every weekend."

PCP: "It sounds like you are drinking alcohol less frequently than your friends. My concern is that even less frequent alcohol use can be risky. For adolescents, even infrequent use of alcohol can negatively impact your developing brain, increase the risk of developing an alcohol use disorder and is associated with a host of other problems. I would like you to learn a little bit more about alcohol and its impact on the brain so you have a better sense of the risks associated with alcohol use."

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