

WWW.LEARNABOUTSAM.ORG
WWW.GOODDRUGPOLICY.ORG

Marijuana & Other Drug Policy: What You Need to Know

Kevin A. Sabet, PhD,

 Foundation for
Drug Policy
Solutions

SAM Smart
Approaches to
Marijuana
preventing another big tobacco

Collaboration

SAM has collaborated with credentialed and reputable groups across the country



American Medical Association



American Academy of Pediatrics



National Business Group on Health®

National Business Group on Health

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
CHILD & ADOLESCENT
PSYCHIATRY

WWW.AACAP.ORG

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

Other leading public health authorities

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Collaboration

SAM has also collaborated with over 30 state affiliates, including:

Treatment centers
Recovery groups
Prevention organizations
Law enforcement
Leading medical authorities
Volunteer citizens
Business groups



Ultra Potent Marijuana



Not this...



...but this

Marijuana Plant Potency

From an average of 3% to an average of nearly 20% THC

8.9%
2008

18-23%
2021

95-99%
2021

Concentrate Potency

4.7%
2008

55.7%
2017

Marijuana Has Become Significantly More Potent Since the 1960s, 70s, 80s, and 90s



"Green Crack" Wax



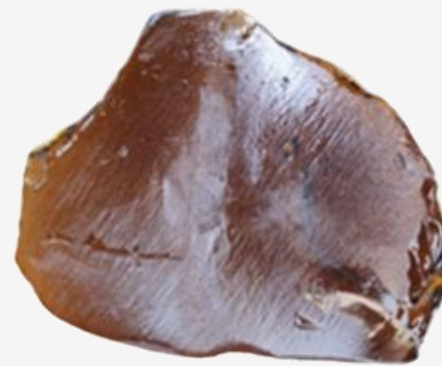
"Ear Wax"



Butane Hash Oil (BHO)



Hash Oil Capsules



"Shatter"



"Budder"

Marijuana is not "just a plant"

Derivatives contain up to 99% THC

Former U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams warns against marijuana use by pregnant women, teens:

“This isn’t your mother’s marijuana; the marijuana of today is significantly more potent.”

Yale



“A dangerous drug”

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“Public policy is outpacing science when it comes to marijuana.”

“What we know is that marijuana is in fact addictive... this may come as a surprise to some people... We don't at this point have high-quality evidence that tells us that in fact, marijuana is both safe and effective for use for medical purposes.”

U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy
July 27, 2017

Yale



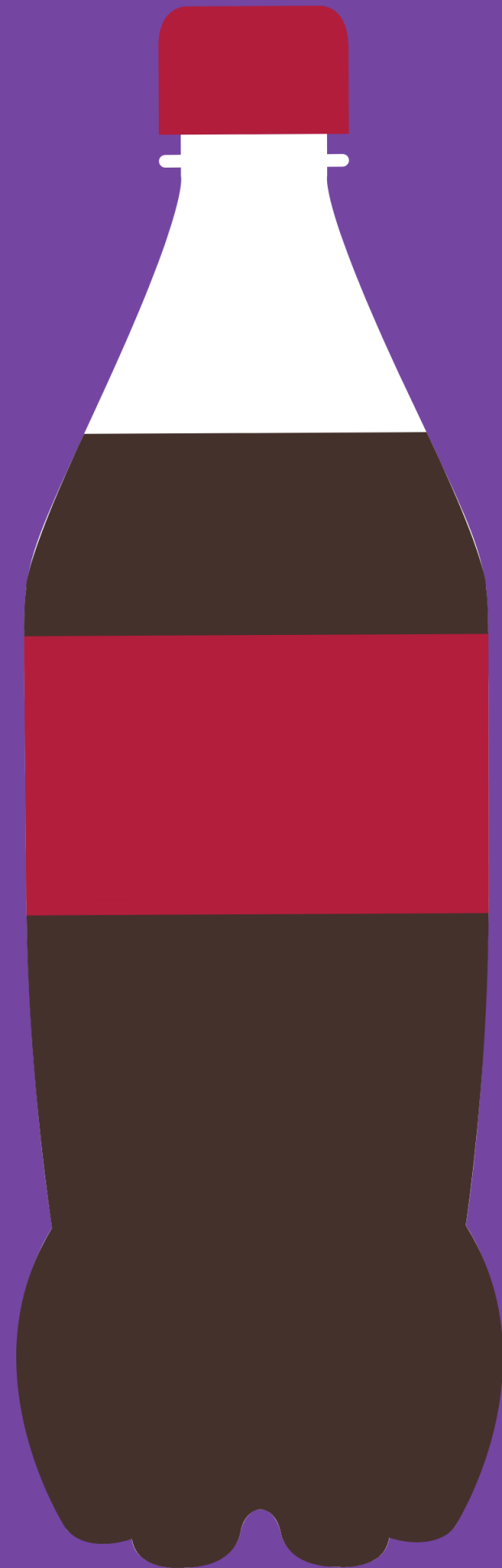
“[M]arijuana is, in fact, addictive”

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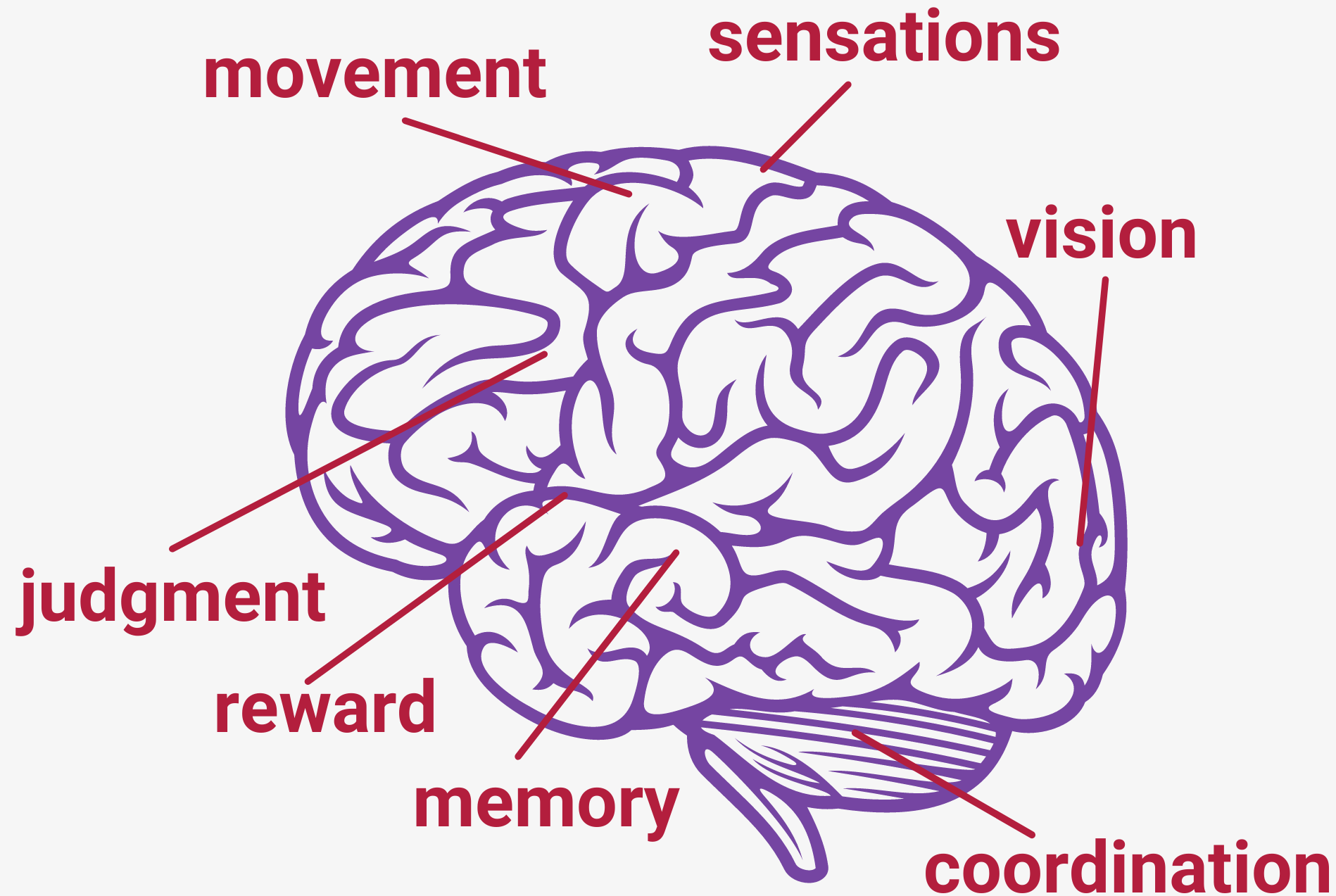
**A new kind of
consumer:
Drinking 33
cappuccinos
to get 65x
caffeine in one
20 oz Cola**

Yale

Caulkins, 2019



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Cannabinoid Receptors Are Located Throughout the Brain and Regulate a Host of Brain Activity

Brain Development
 Memory & Cognition
 Motivation & Reward
 Appetite

Immunological Function
 Reproduction
 Movement Coordination
 Pain Regulation & Analgesia

**SAM promotes
an evidence-
based
approach to
marijuana
policy that
prioritizes
public health**

NON-PARTISAN BUT HIGH-PROFILE

founded by former Democratic Congressman Patrick Kennedy and leading Republican pundit David Frum

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY BOARD

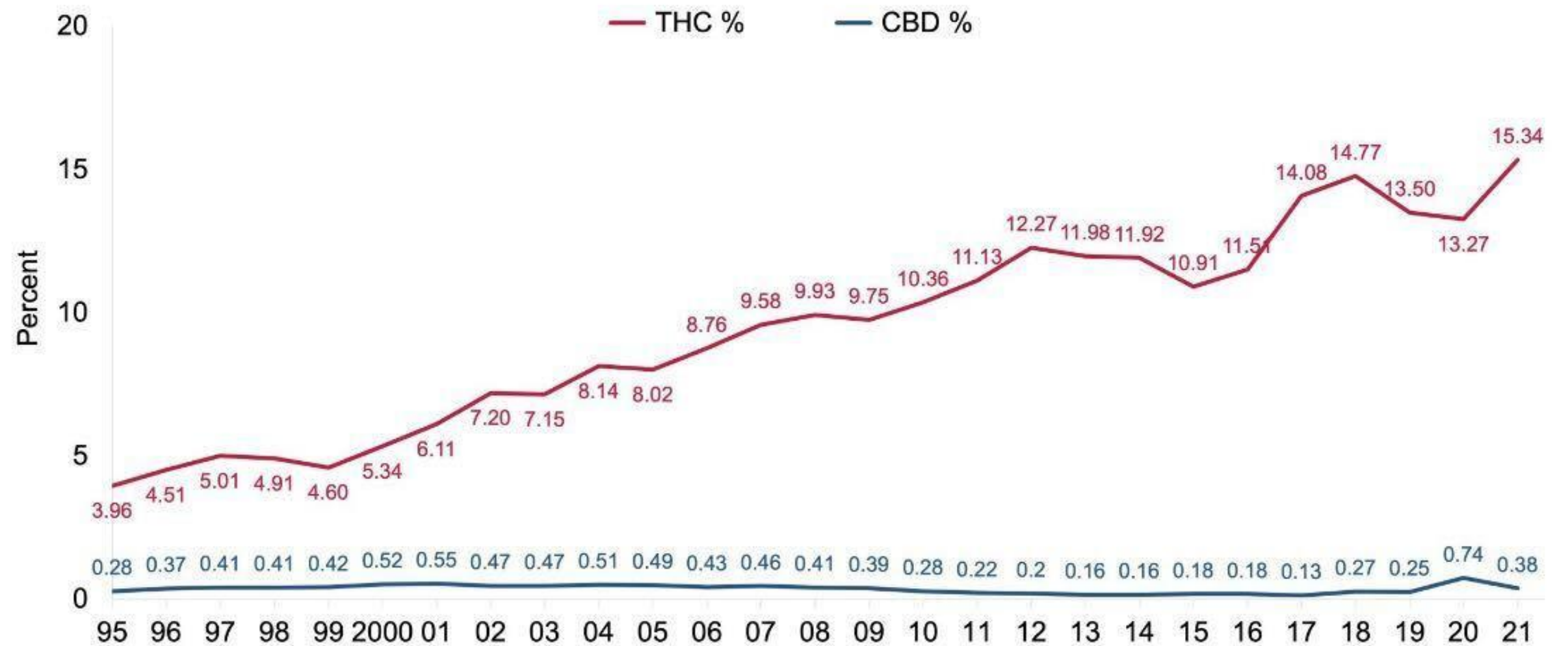
composed of more than 12 leading researchers, professors, and public health/legal experts

HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PRESS MENTIONS

including major media outlets such as The New York Times, NBC News, Slate, BBC News, and FoxNews

Marijuana today
is far more
potent than it
ever has been

Percentage of THC and CBD in Cannabis Samples Seized by the DEA, 1995-2021



SOURCE: U Miss, Potency Monitoring Project

**Daily users
of high-
potency
marijuana
are**

5X

**more likely to suffer from a
psychotic disorder compared
with those who have never
used marijuana**

[https://www.thelancet.com/article/S2215-0366\(19\)30048-3/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/article/S2215-0366(19)30048-3/fulltext)



**California's
illicit market
problem
continues to
get worse**

70-80%

of marijuana sold in
state-legal dispensaries
in California was
produced and grown
illegally

85-90%

of the California-
produced marijuana is
exported

NBC News 2022

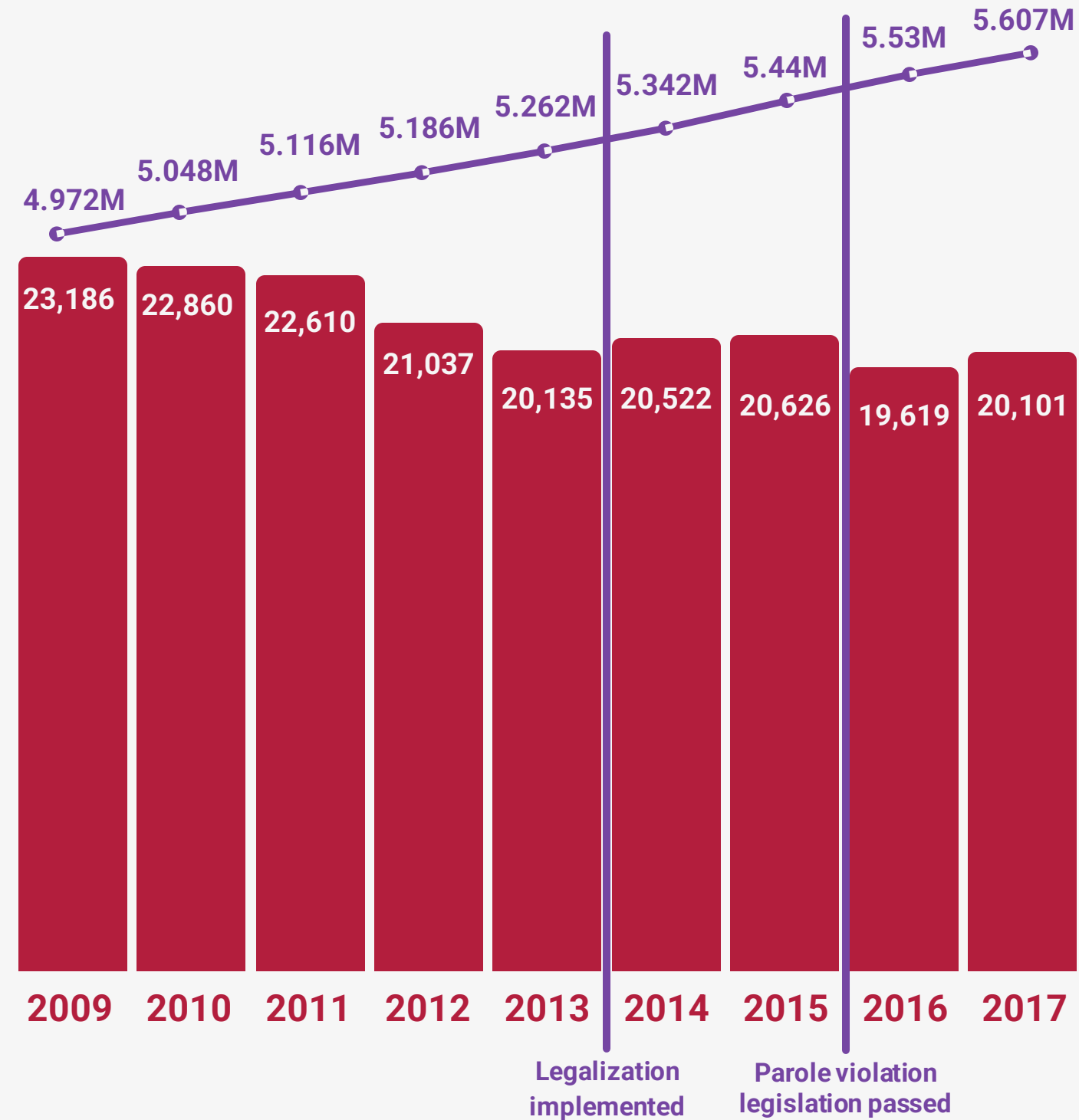


Source: Oregon State Police

**Just 18 to 30
Percent of
Oregon's
Marijuana is
Sold Legally**

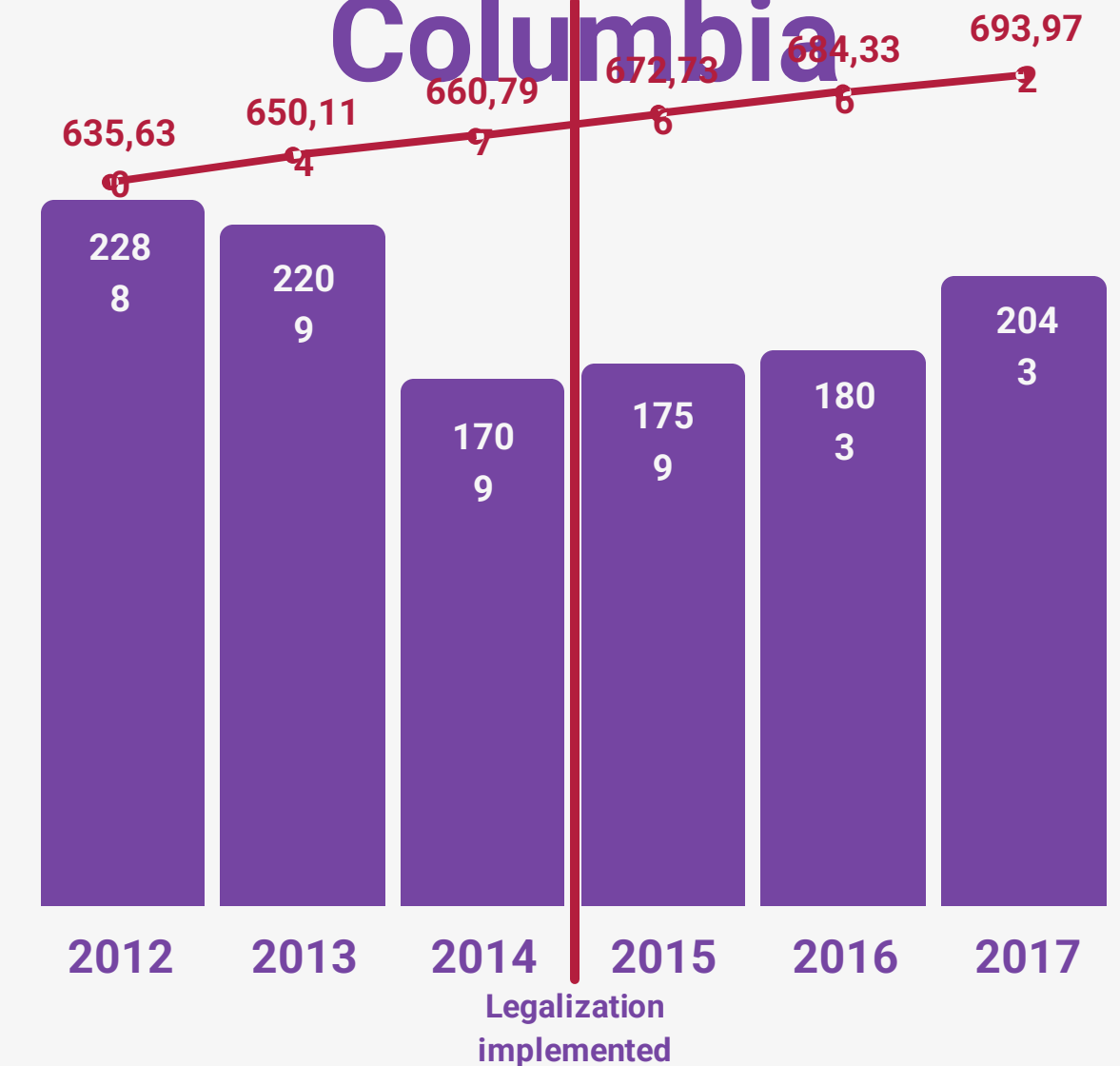
Legalization
has not
reduced
the prison
population

Colorado



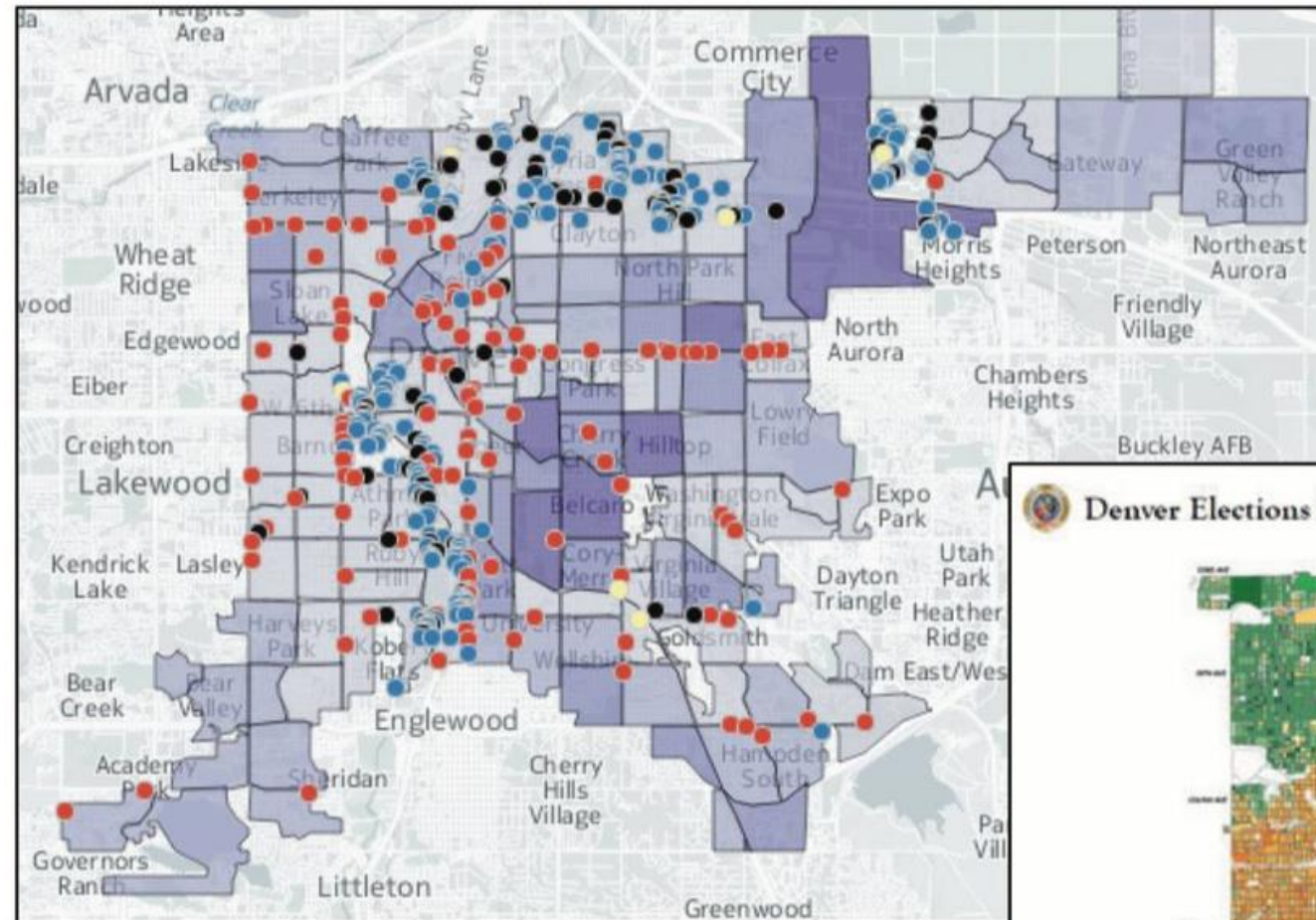
● State population
■ Prison population

District of Columbia



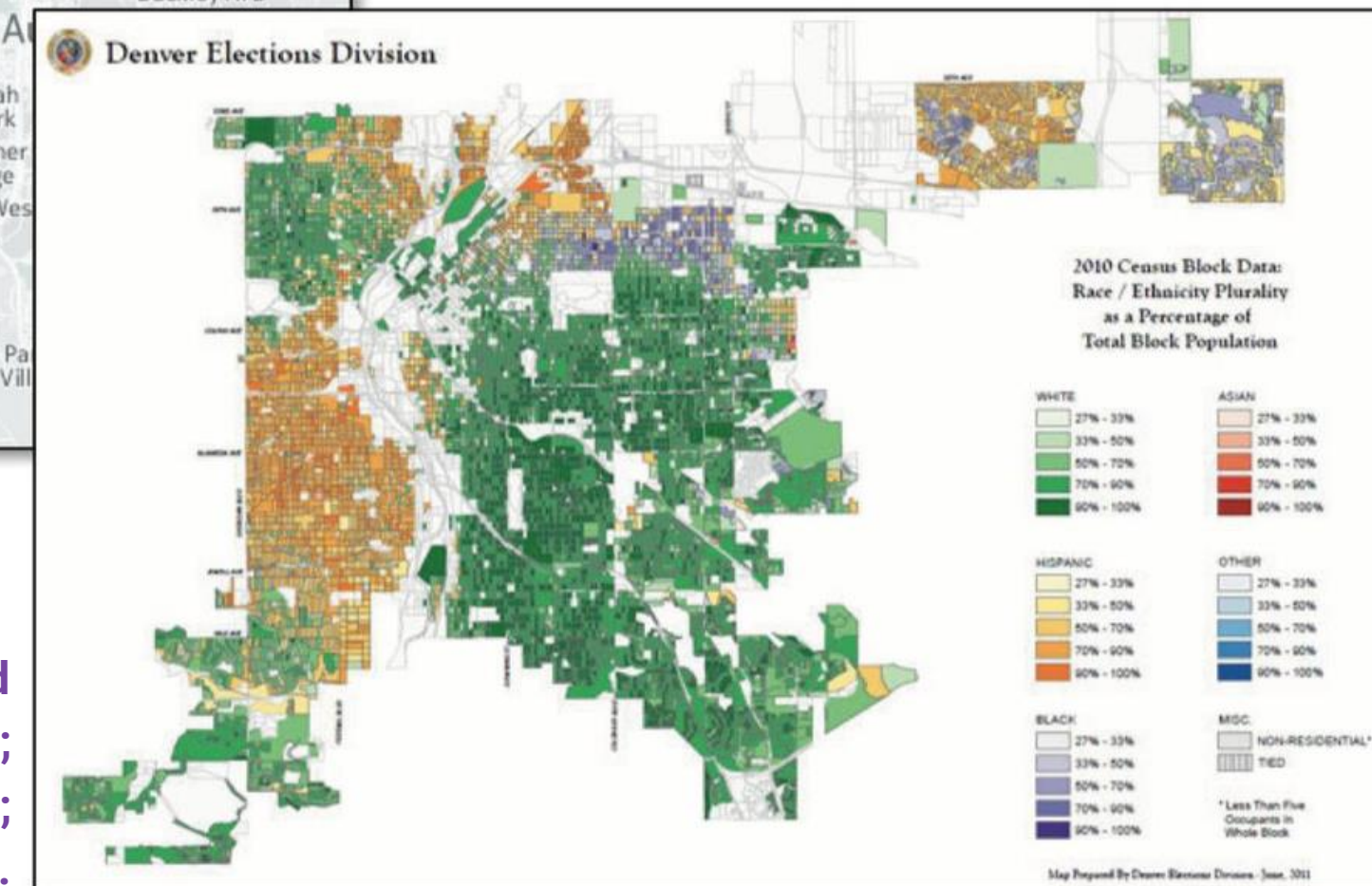
● District population
■ Prison population

Marijuana businesses in Denver are concentrated in communities of color



Locations of pot businesses. Dots represent businesses; neighborhoods shaded by income, lighter = lower-income.

Denver neighborhoods colored by race/ethnicity; green = White; orange = Latino; purple = Black; red = Asian; blue = Other.





Is Marijuana a Gateway Drug?

Gateway drug is a loaded term

Experts agree marijuana use is associated with the use of other drugs

The use of other licit substances, such as cigarettes, and illicit substances, such as cocaine, is often preceded by the use of marijuana

Not everyone who uses marijuana will go on to use "harder" substances, but almost everyone who does use harder drugs used marijuana first

By preventing marijuana use or delaying its initiation, greater drug use may be prevented

Daily users of marijuana have greater illicit drug use

48X

as likely to use cocaine in the last year

25X

as likely to use methamphetamine in the last year

5X

as likely to misuse opioids in the last year

5X

as likely to have heavy alcohol use in the last month

2020 [National Survey on Drug Use and Health](#):

Marijuana- related hospitalizations

63%

of marijuana-related
hospitalizations in 2021
involved marijuana
alongside another
substance

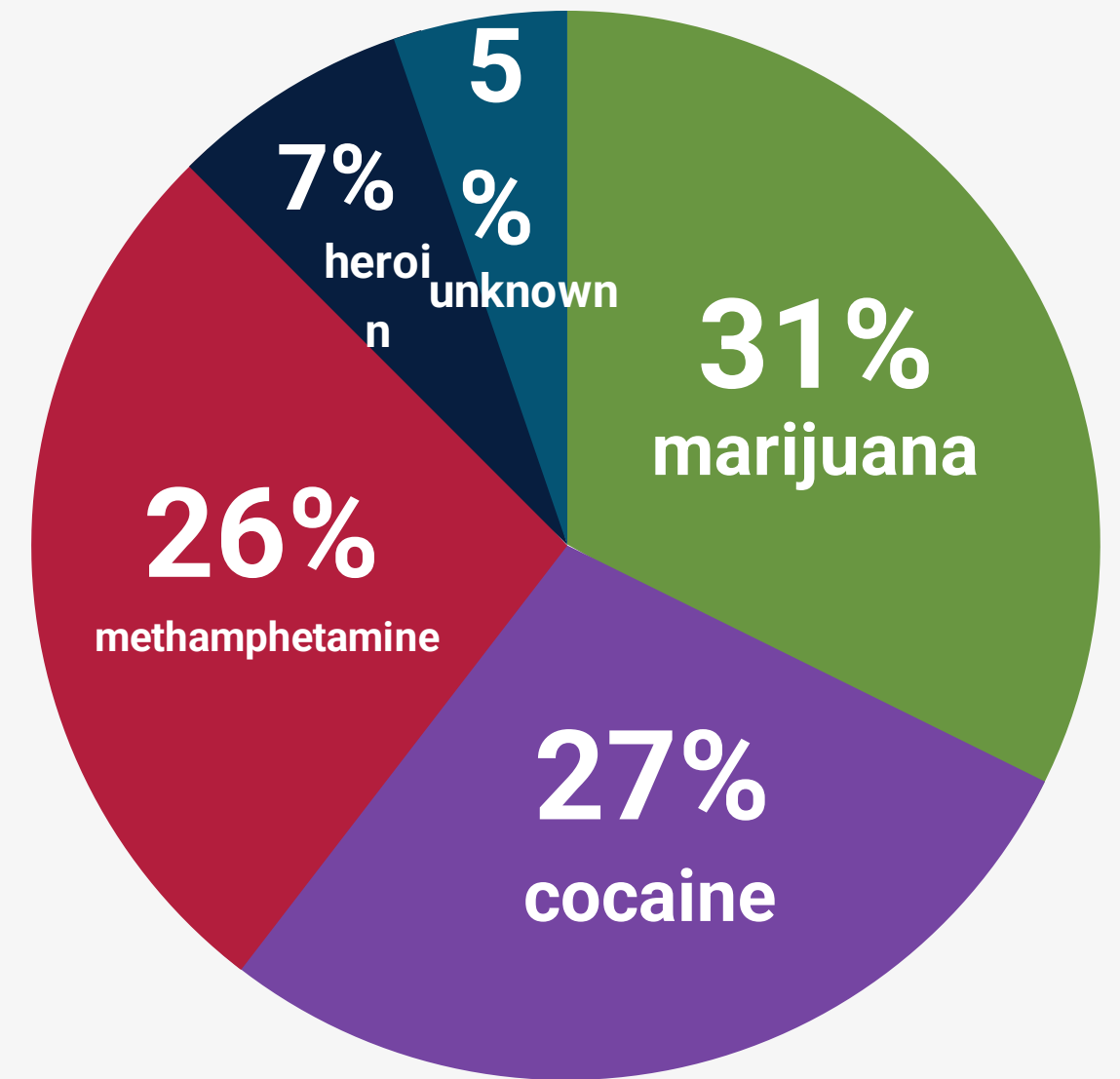
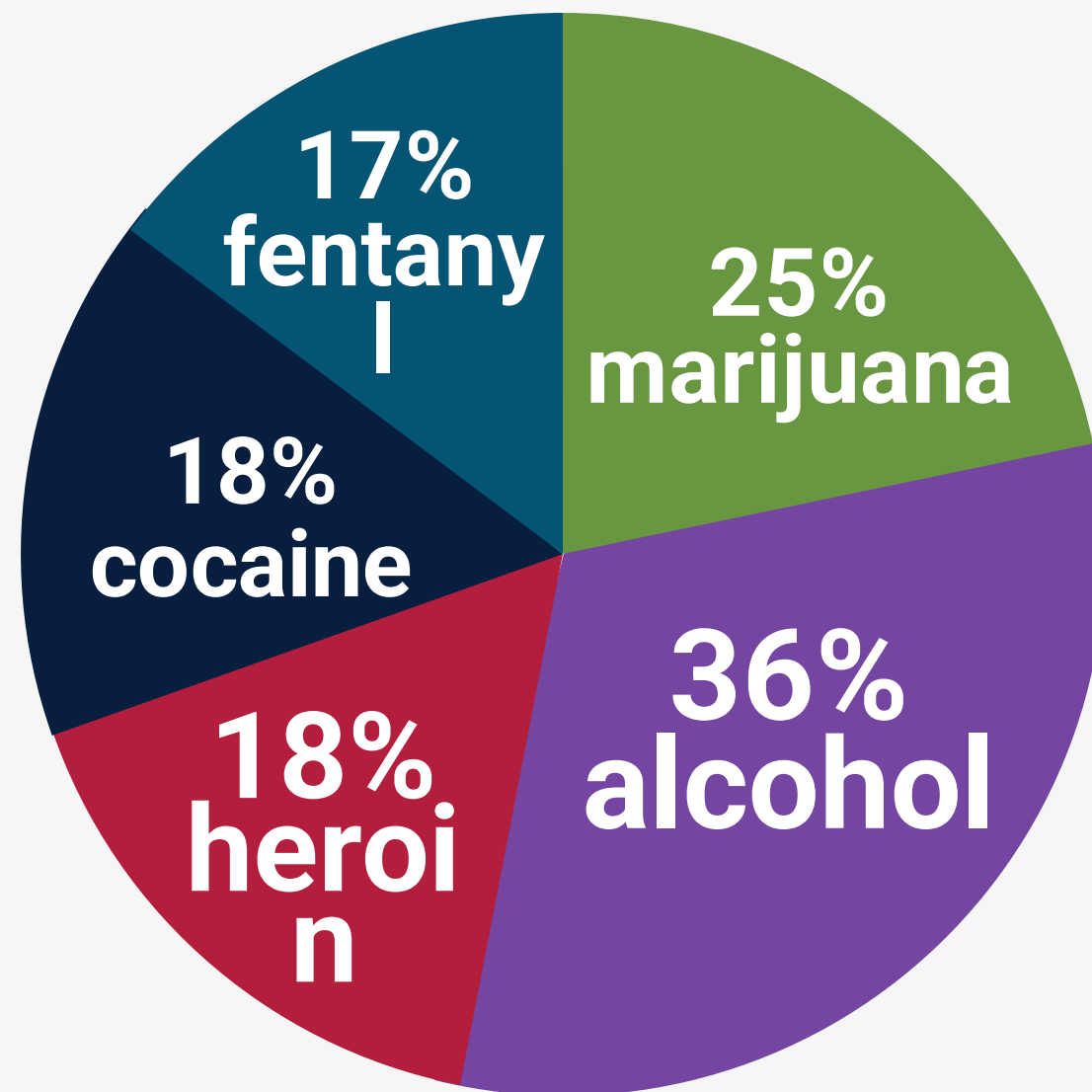
53% involved alcohol
31% involved Methamphetamine
25% involved cocaine
7% involved fentanyl

SAMHSA's [Drug Abuse Warning
Network](#)

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Marijuana-related hospitalizations

Marijuana was the most common substance in polysubstance alcohol-related ED visits



Marijuana was the second most common drug in polysubstance methamphetamine-related ED visits



Australia's National Drug Strategy Household Survey

2X

Non-medical marijuana users were twice as likely to have used another illicit substance

3X

Marijuana users are 3 times more likely to smoke tobacco vs non-users

[National Drug Strategy Household Survey, 2019](#)

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Especially for
teens,
substance
use is related



There is a bidirectional relationship between the adolescent use of marijuana and tobacco and alcohol.

Those who initiate marijuana use at a young age are **more likely to use tobacco and alcohol. And those who use tobacco or alcohol at a young age are also **more likely to later use marijuana.****

90% of adults with a substance use disorder began smoking, drinking, or using other drugs before the age of 18.

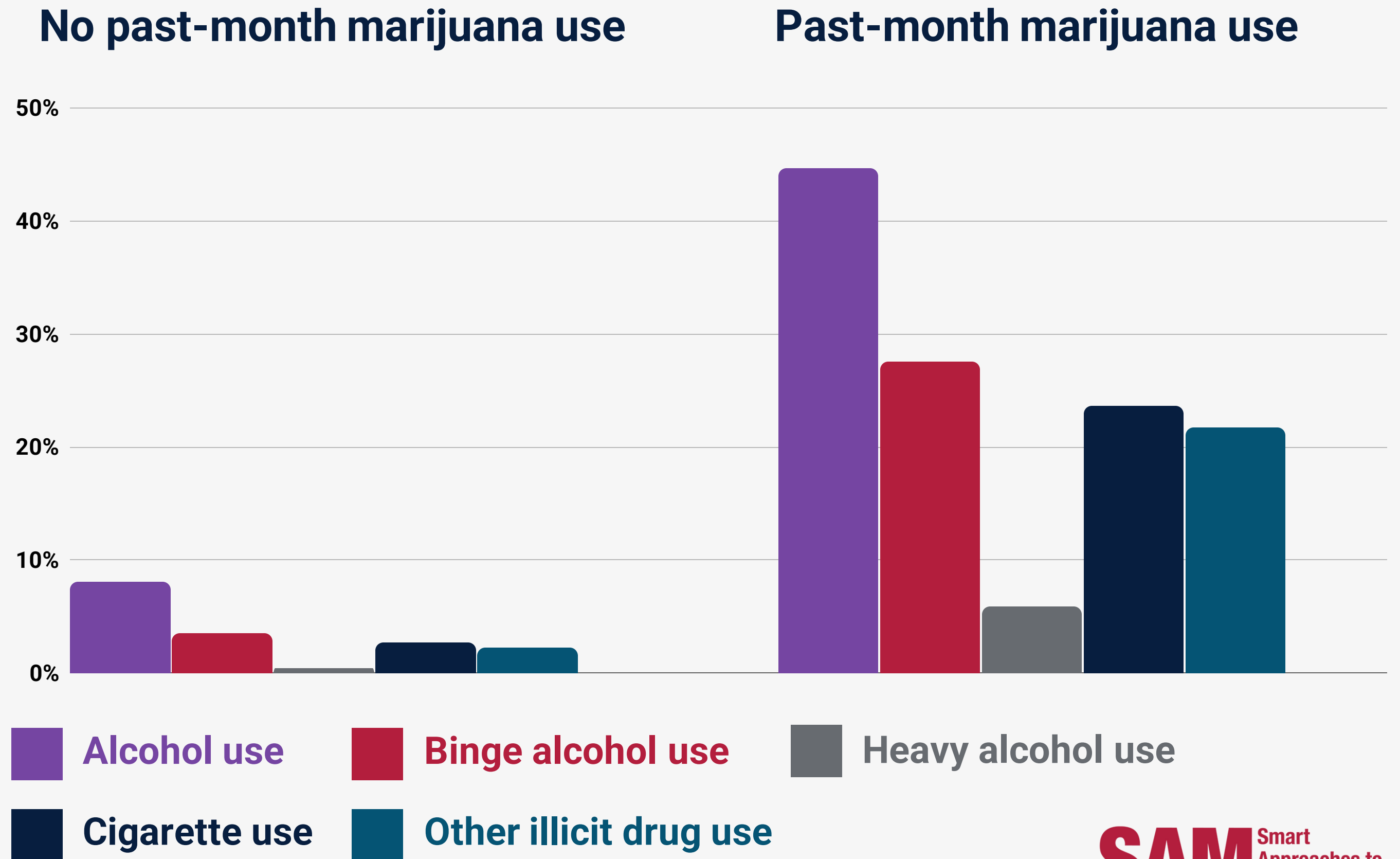
<https://onechoiceprevention.org/toolkit/#section-resources>

A 40 year study on the sequence of tobacco,
alcohol, and marijuana use found:

**"Marijuana is increasingly the
first substance in the sequence
of adolescent drug use."**

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30399500/>

Teen marijuana use is associated with higher use of other drugs



Compared to their peers who did not use marijuana, youth aged 12-17 who used marijuana in the past month were:

7.9X

more likely to binge
drink

9.9X

more likely to use other
illegal drugs, including
opioids

8.9X

more likely to smoke
cigarettes



20X

Teens who vaped were 20 times more likely to use marijuana than teens who did not use nicotine products

40X

Teens who smoked and vaped were 20 times more likely to use marijuana than teens who did not use nicotine products

[HealthDay News](#)

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53%

of young adults who smoked
at least one cigarette in the
past month also used
marijuana in the past month

45%

of the time, marijuana
and cigarettes were used
together

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3507655>

L

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The
prevalence
of daily
marijuana
use:

6X

higher among those with
daily smoking

3.5X

higher among those with
non-daily smoking

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S037687162200300>

The study author included the following comments from patients concerning their marijuana use and subsequent desire to resume opiate use:

“Each time I relapsed on weed; I would immediately think heroin is so much better.”

“If I'm already getting high, I might as well get really high, because opiates are better.”

“Smoking weed was like a little tickle and started the cravings for heroin in motion.”

“Weed was just not enough and accelerated my need for a heroin high.”

“Marijuana use was just not enough, and it made me want to use heroin.”

Marijuana Use Leads to Opiate Use Relapse in Young Adults





Recovery



1 in 10

Americans have reported having a significant substance use problem at some point in their lives

75%

of these Americans report being in recovery

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0376871620303343>

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Not all people in recovery seek assisted or formal treatment; this is known as unassisted recovery or natural recovery

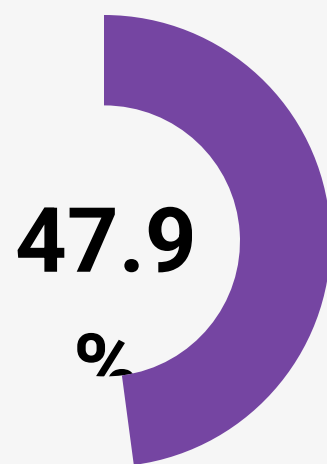


Studies of natural recoveries from alcohol, heroin, and cocaine abuse have indicated that many individuals are able to change their drug or alcohol use when the **benefits of using the drug are outweighed by the negatives.**

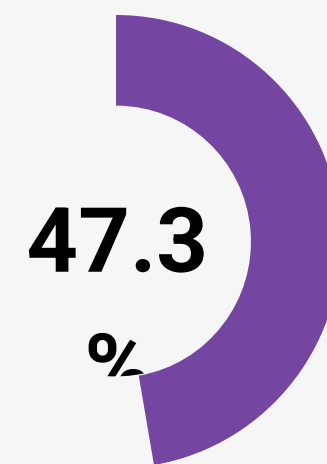
46.1%

of those who resolved a substance use problem reported an unassisted recovery.

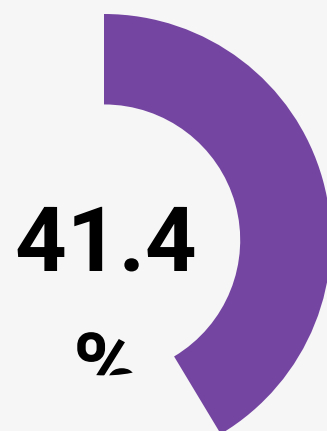
Among those who received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year



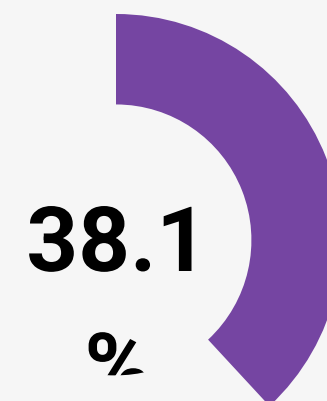
outpatient
recovery
facility



virtual
services



self-help
group



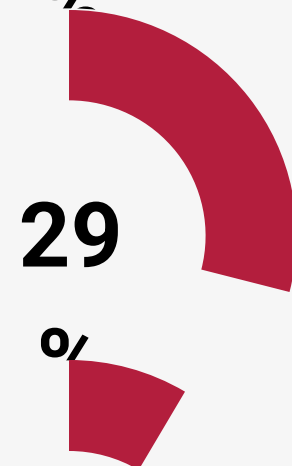
outpatient
mental health
center



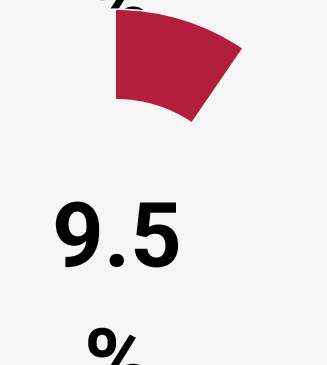
inpatient
recovery
facility



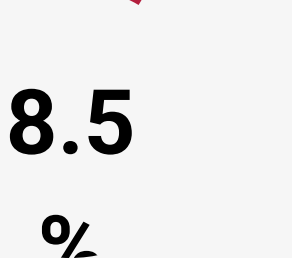
private
doctor's
office



inpatient
hospital



emergency
room



prison or
jail

Rates of cannabis use disorder in 2021

16.3
million

Americans with
Cannabis Use Disorder

1.3
million

individuals aged 12-17

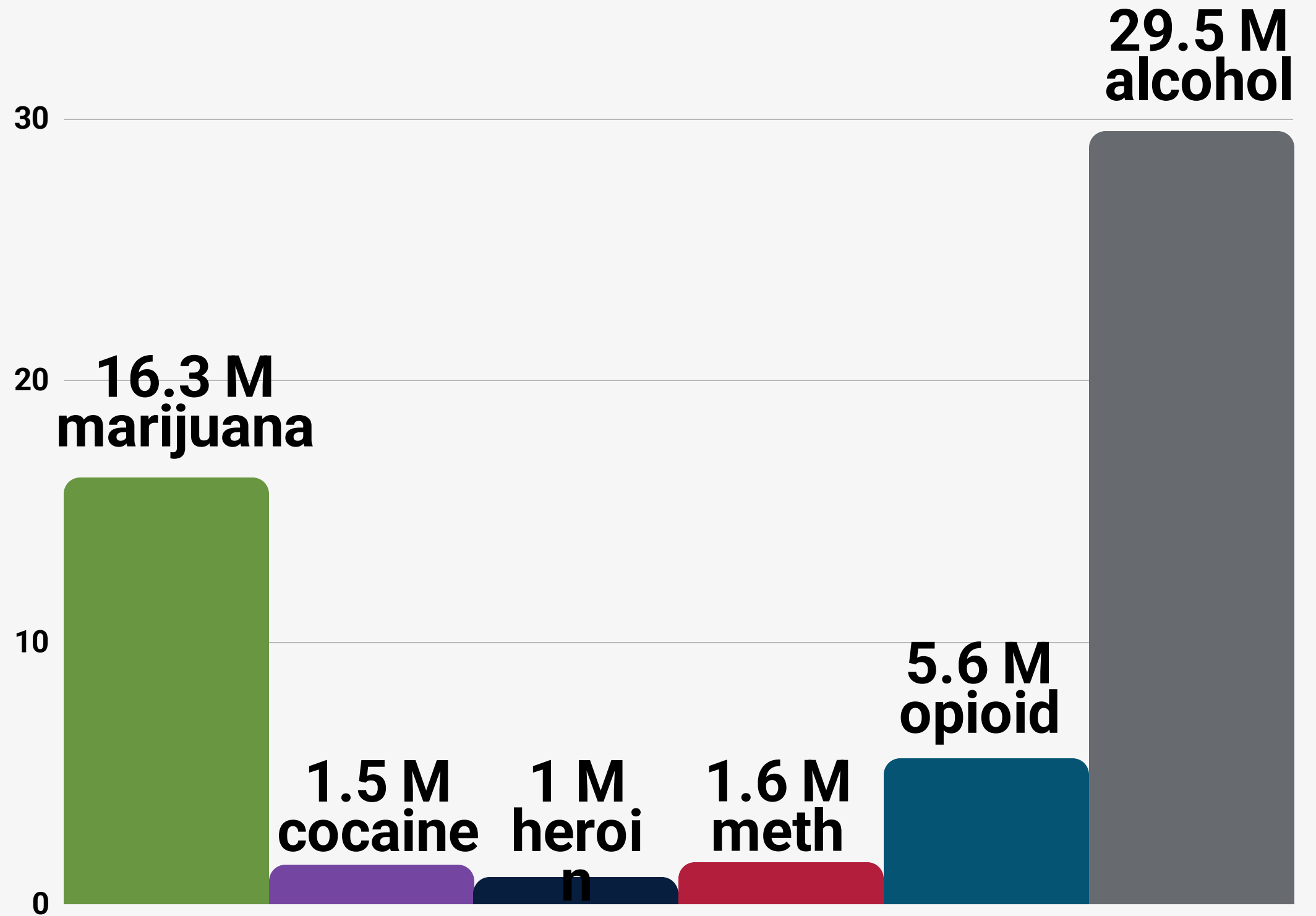
4.8
million


individuals aged 18-25

<https://www.samhsa.gov/data/release/2021-national-survey-drug-use-and-health-nsduh-releases>

Rates of substance use disorder

Rates of substance use disorder in the US across all age groups





Among 12–17-year-olds, marijuana was the most common substance (including alcohol) associated with a substance use disorder.

<https://www.samhsa.gov/data/release/2021-national-survey-drug-use-and-health-nsduh-releases>



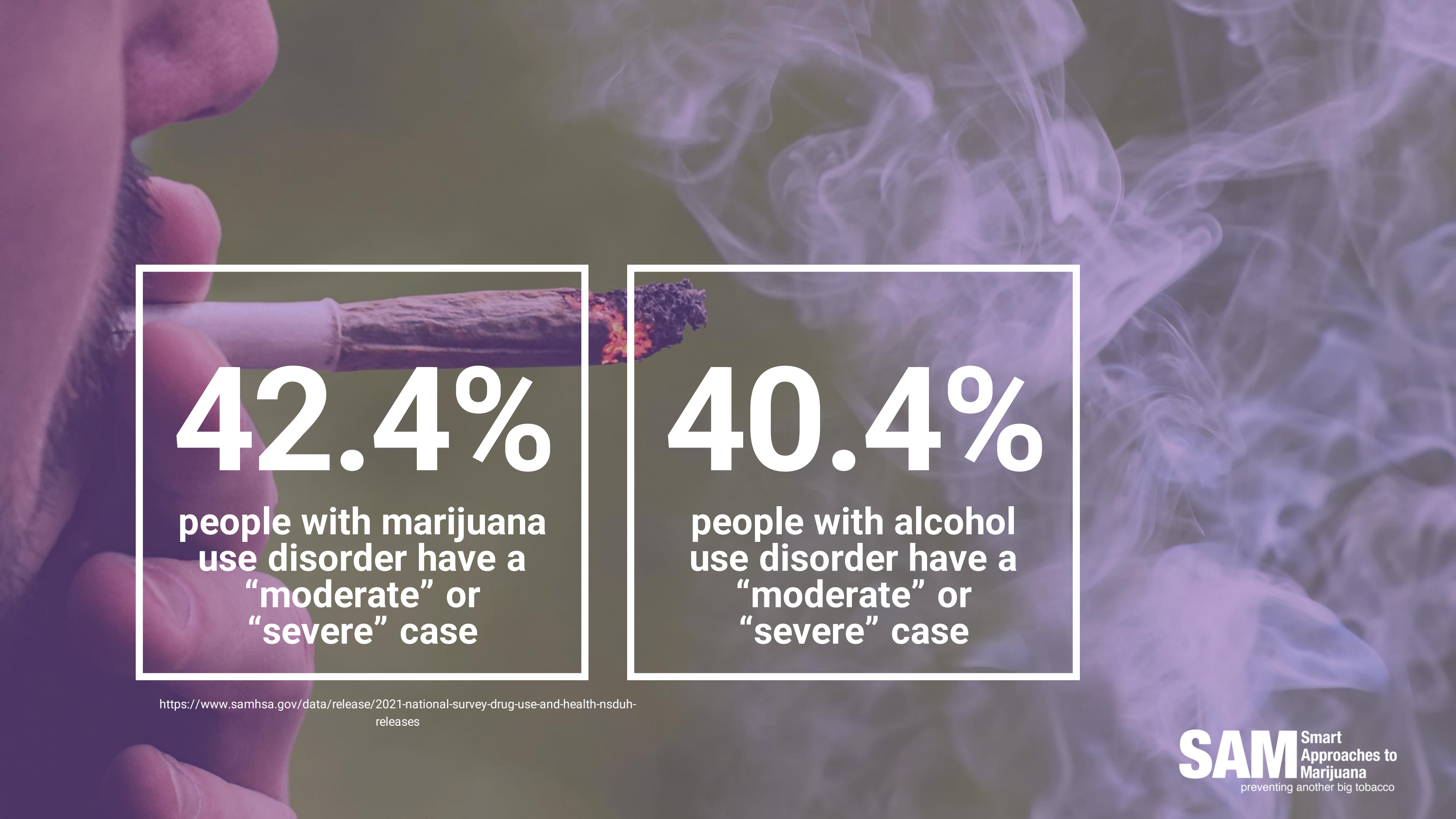
1 in 3

**past-year marijuana
users have a cannabis
use disorder**

1 in 6

**past-year alcohol
users have an
alcohol use disorder**

<https://www.samhsa.gov/data/release/2021-national-survey-drug-use-and-health-nsduh-releases>



42.4%

people with marijuana
use disorder have a
“moderate” or
“severe” case

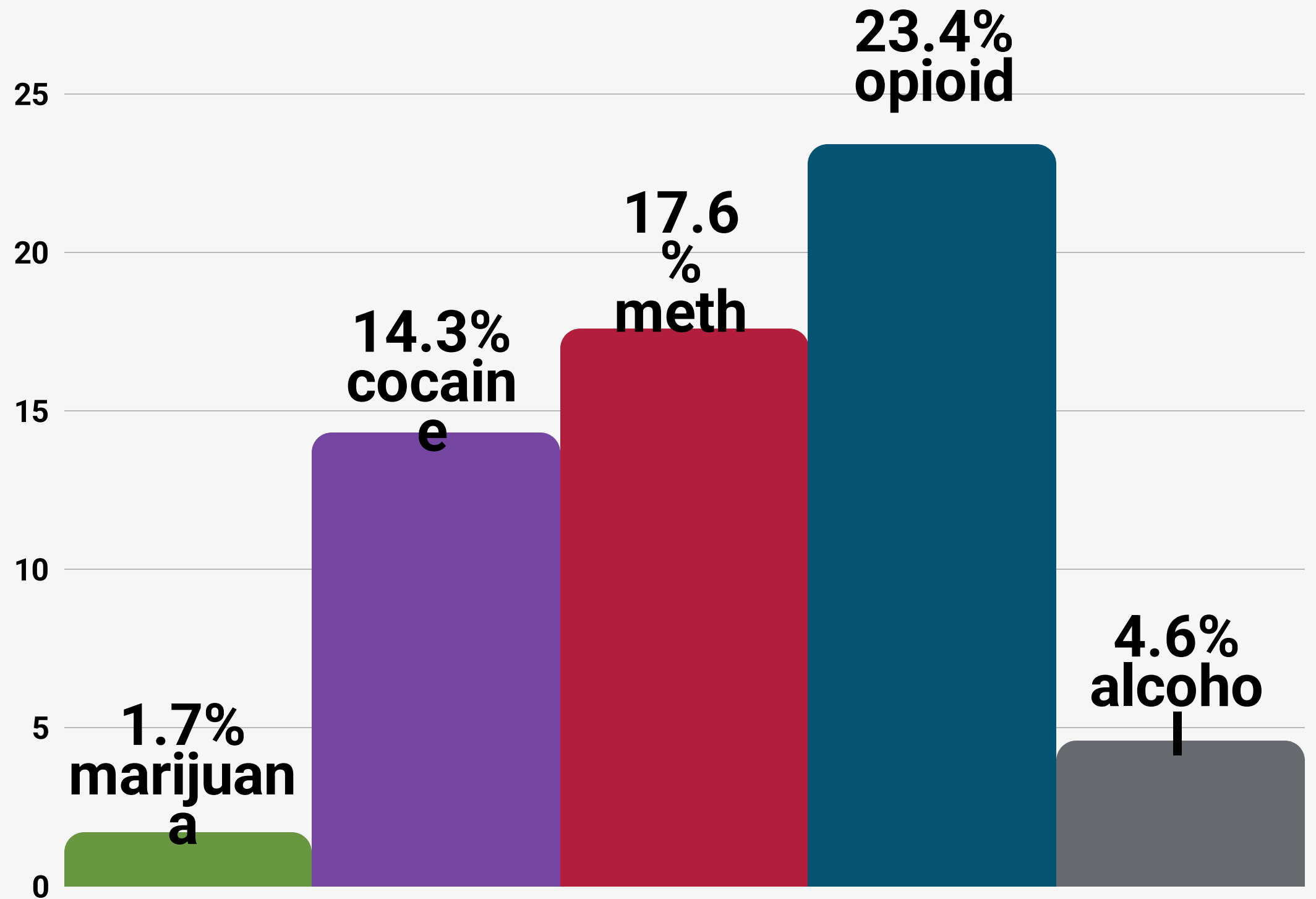
40.4%

people with alcohol
use disorder have a
“moderate” or
“severe” case

<https://www.samhsa.gov/data/release/2021-national-survey-drug-use-and-health-nsduh-releases>

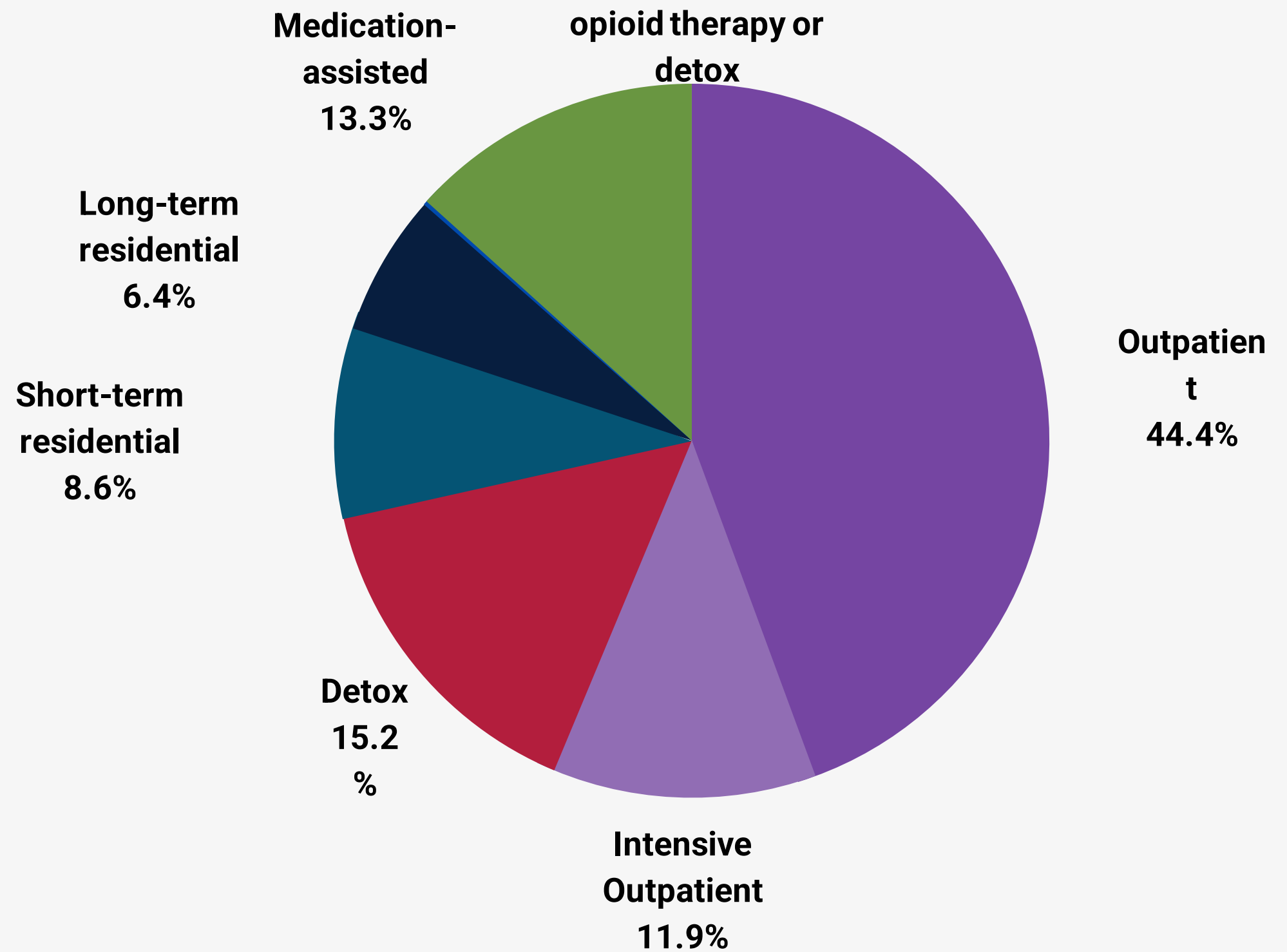
Most people who have cannabis use disorder are not receiving treatment

Percent of Americans who sought treatment for their substance use disorder



**Most treatment
is outpatient**

Type of treatment service at discharge: 2020





9.8%

marijuana was the primary substance for 9.8% of admissions to treatment

94%

of individuals admitted to treatment for primary marijuana use began using it before they were 21

70.8%

of primary admissions for those between the ages of 15 and 18 were for marijuana

<https://www.samhsa.gov/data/report/treatment-episode-data-set-teds-2020-admissions>

A glass of amber liquid with ice and a blister pack of pills on a wooden surface.

31.2%

of treatment admissions aged 12+ were for alcohol

29.6%

of treatment admissions aged 12+ were for opioids

<https://www.samhsa.gov/data/report/treatment-episode-data-set-teds-2020-admissions>



70%

of persons with alcohol use disorder and those with alcohol problems improve without interventions (natural recovery)

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7643818>

Privateer Holdings, the First Marijuana Hedge Fund



"Brands will determine the future of the cannabis industry."

Privateer Holdings "fundamental belief"

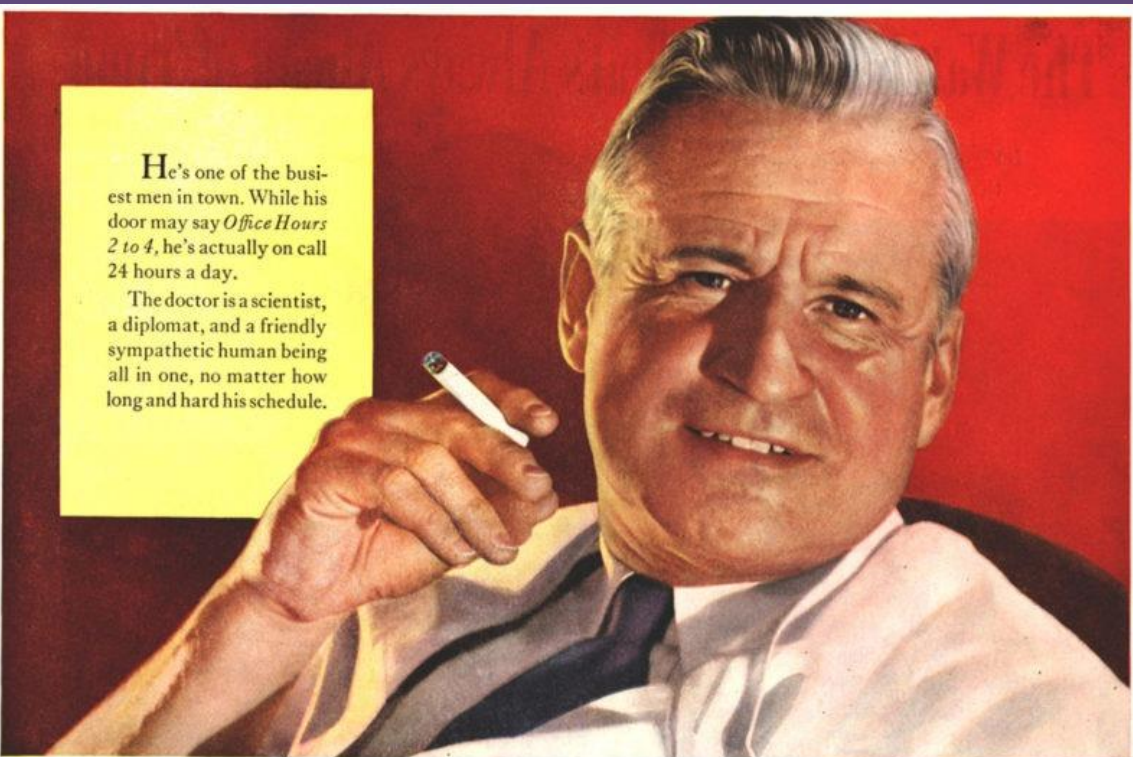
<https://privateer.co/about>

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He's one of the busiest men in town. While his door may say *Office Hours 2 to 4*, he's actually on call 24 hours a day.

The doctor is a scientist, a diplomat, and a friendly sympathetic human being all in one, no matter how long and hard his schedule.



According to a recent Nationwide survey:

MORE DOCTORS SMOKE CAMELS THAN ANY OTHER CIGARETTE

DOCTORS in every branch of medicine—113,597 in all—were queried in this nationwide study of cigarette preference. Three leading research organizations made the survey. The gist of the query was—What cigarette do you smoke, Doctor?

The brand named most was Camel!

The rich, full flavor and cool mildness of Camel's superb blend of costlier tobaccos seem to have the same appeal to the smoking tastes of doctors as to millions of other smokers. If you are a Camel smoker, this preference among doctors will hardly surprise you. If you're not—well, try Camels now.



Your "T-Zone" Will Tell You...

**T for Taste . . .
T for Throat . . .**
that's your proving ground for any cigarette. See if Camels don't suit your "T-Zone" to a "T."



H. J. Brewster, Tobacco Company, Winston-Salem, N. C.

CAMELS Costlier Tobaccos

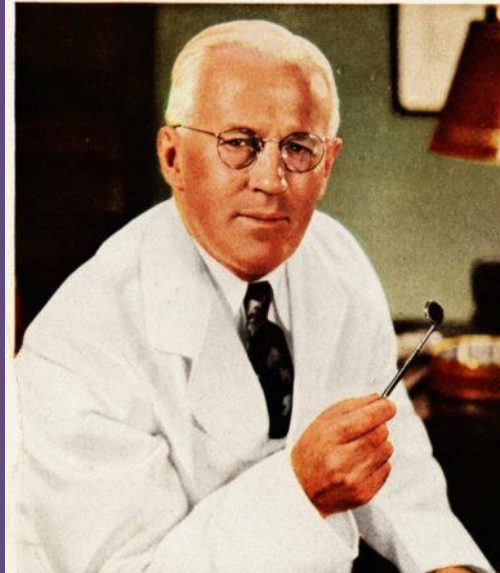
Viceroy's FILTER the Smoke!



As your Dentist, I would recommend **VICEROYS**

Noted throat specialists report on 30-day test of Camel smokers . . .

NOT ONE SINGLE CASE OF THROAT IRRITATION *due to smoking* CAMELS!



Yes, these were the findings of noted throat specialists after a total of 2,470 weekly examinations of the throats of hundreds of men and women who smoked Camels—and only Camels—for 30 consecutive days.



THE TEST WAS REALLY FUN! EVERY CAMEL TASTED SO GOOD! AND I DIDN'T NEED MY DOCTOR'S REPORT TO KNOW CAMELS ARE MILD!

ELANA O'BRIAN, real estate broker, one of the hundreds of people from coast to coast who made the 30-Day Test of Camel Mildness under the observation of noted throat specialists.

... AND THOUSANDS MORE AGREE!



"CAMELS AGREE with my throat—and they sure taste great!" says Ed Paxson, chemical engineer, who made the Camel 30-day test under a throat specialist.

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT Virginia Wilcox: "I didn't believe any cigarette could smoke so mild. But Camels are the one—they certainly agree with my throat!"

"I'M A VETERAN when it comes to smoking Camels. They give me the kind of smoke I like—lots of flavor and plenty mild!" Michael Douglas, singer.



MUSLIEF TELLER, secretary: "I'm delighted that I made the 30-day mildness test. It introduced me to the cigarette that really agrees with my throat—Camels!"

"THE 30-DAY TEST was a real education. It taught me that there's no cigarette quite like a Camel!" Tod Crane, air travel agency owner.

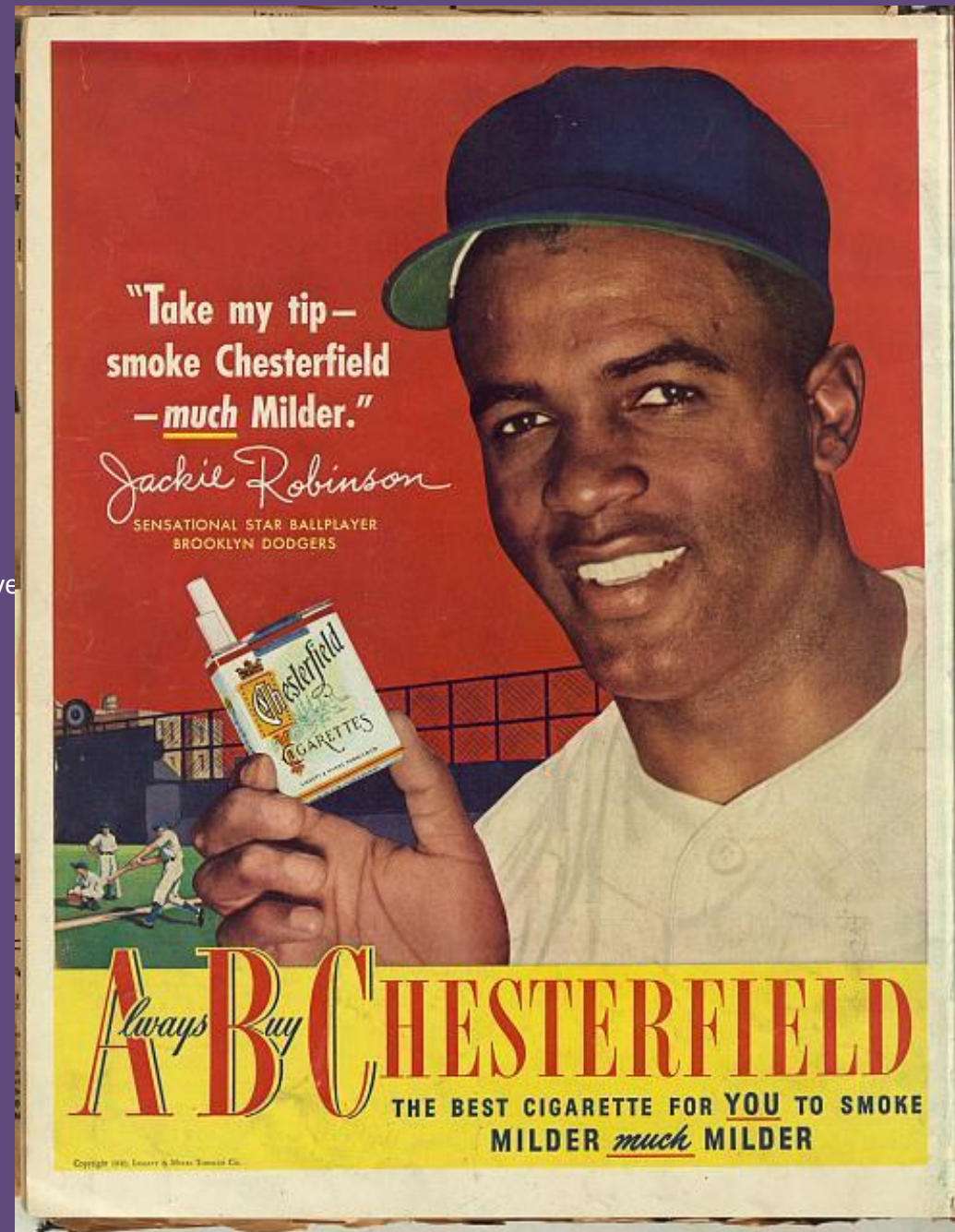
SPORTSWOMAN Jean French: "I like to make my own tests. I smoked Camels for 30 days. They tasted so good. I've changed to Camels for keeps!"



Start your own 30-Day Camel MILDNESS Test Today!

It's fun—it's enlightening! All you do is smoke Camels, and only Camels, for 30 days. Compare them in your "T-Zone" (T for taste, T for throat). See if that rich, full Camel flavor and that cool, cool Camel mildness doesn't win you to Camels for keeps.

H. J. Brewster Tobacco Co., Winston-Salem, N. C.



#2



ment



Crypto: inve









”

While laboratory animals are an expensive way of understanding the risks of cannabis use, North Americans come free.

The Economist (2019)

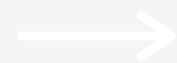
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Is Marijuana **Legalization** a Gateway **Policy**?

Where we are in 2023



Oregon: Became the first state to decriminalize the personal possession of all drugs in 2020, legalized psilocybin for use in medical settings

Push to legalize injection sites without proper oversight or neighborhood considerations

Push to legalize psychedelics



Solutions



Prevention



Intervention and Treatment



Recovery



Smart Enforcement



International Efforts



Thank you for joining today!
kevin@learnaboutsam.org
www.learnaboutsam.org