



An article published on the NHS website explains the effects of popular drugs on the brain both in the short term and long term. It makes for some interesting reading so we thought we'd break it down and post it here.

(Original research carried out by noted neuroscientist, professor David Nutt and Martin Barnes of the charity Drugscope. Quotes present are from their original transcript).

### **Cannabis (Marijuana, weed, dope, skunk)**

**Short Term:** Although widely regarded as a soft recreational drug, cannabis is a very addictive substance and a real threat to people's mental capabilities. Users often use cannabis for relaxation purposes, however it can cause forgetfulness and anxiety in the short term.

"If you use a lot of cannabis regularly, you're putting yourself at risk of some temporary problems, such as confusion or delusions," says Barnes.

**Long Term:** "It's possible that cannabis might trigger long-term mental health problems, including psychosis, schizophrenia and depression," says Barnes. "Evidence suggests that cannabis users who come from a family with a history of mental health problems may be particularly susceptible to these symptoms."

### **Acid (LSD) & Magic Mushrooms**

**Short Term:** As hallucinogenics mushrooms and LSDs effect the user's senses making them experience their surroundings differently. As their surroundings are intensified or distorted users can become panicked and have bouts of paranoia. Acid can produce effects for up to 12 hours and there is no knowing whether the 'trip' will be usual or extremely frightening.

**Long Term:** Long term and heavy LSD users can experience unprompted flashbacks. "Sometimes people may experience psychosis or paranoia, believing or seeing things that aren't really there," says Barnes.



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