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Illinois Church Action on Alcohol & Addiction Problems

Marijuana Alert - November 9, 2022



Half of the Dentists Say Patients Are High at Dental Appointments

Newswise — As personal and medical marijuana use increases nationwide, the American Dental Association (ADA) suggests patients refrain from using marijuana before dental visits after a new survey finds more than half of dentists (52%) reported patients arriving for appointments high on marijuana or another drug.

“Unfortunately, sometimes having marijuana in your system results in needing an additional visit.”

That’s because being high at the dentist can limit the care that can be delivered. **The survey of dentists found 56% reported limiting treatment to patients who were high.** Because of how marijuana and anesthesia impact the central nervous system, 46% of surveyed dentists reported sometimes needing to increase anesthesia to treat patients who needed care.

Findings were uncovered in two online surveys earlier this year – one of 557 dentists and a second nationally representative survey of 1,006 consumers – conducted as part of trend research by the ADA.

“Marijuana can lead to increased anxiety, paranoia and hyperactivity, which could make the visit more stressful. It can also increase heart rate and has unwanted respiratory side effects, which increases the risk of using local anesthetics for pain control,” Dr. Quartey said. “Plus, the best treatment options are always ones a dentist and patient decide on together. A clear head is essential for that.”

Studies have also shown regular marijuana users are more likely to have significantly more cavities than non-users.

The science behind oral health and marijuana is beginning to emerge, particularly when it comes to edible or topical forms. Still, there are strong indications that smoking marijuana is **harmful to oral and overall health.**

“Smoking marijuana is associated with gum disease and dry mouth, which can lead to many oral health issues,” Dr. Quartey said. “It also puts smokers at an increased risk of mouth and neck cancers.” [READ](#)

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