

# Marijuana Leads to More-Frequent Sex? Don't Be Misled



By Erik Lief — October 30, 2017



Studying sexual frequency and marijuana use (via Google Images) [1]

Given that this new research centers around both sex *and* drugs – two topics that attract instant attention in our culture – you'll no doubt be hearing a lot about these results in the coming days. So before you're repeatedly told that smoking more pot leads to having more sex (and doesn't that sound appealing?!), that connection is not as strong or direct as the headlines might suggest.

This is not to say the findings should be dismissed; not at all. Since the study is being touted as "the first to examine the relationship between marijuana use and frequency of sexual intercourse at the population level in the United States," according to a statement, researchers are shedding light on an interesting topic, giving rise to new questions and providing welcome food for thought.

So first, let's take a look at the study. And after that, delve into some of the reasons why it doesn't add up so neatly, as for anyone to infer causation between the two activities.

Researchers from Stanford University used data from the CDC's [National Survey of Family Growth](#) [2], gathered from 28,176 females and 22,943 males aged 15 to 49, which determined that daily marijuana smokers had more frequent sex than those who didn't smoke.

Specifically, this "nationally representative cross-sectional survey," the authors wrote, showed that women users had sex with male partners 7.1 times per month, as compared to 6 times/mo for nonsmokers. As for men who had heterosexual sex, the figures were 6.9 per month for smokers and 5.6/mo for nonsmokers.

The period of sexual activity in question was the four weeks prior to the survey. The respondents

were also asked how often they smoked pot over the previous year. And the controlled [study, published](#) <sup>[3]</sup> Oct. 27 in *The Journal of Sexual Medicine*, showed consistent results across the board.

"The overall trend we saw applied to people of both sexes and all races, ages, education levels, income groups and religions, every health status," said senior author Dr. Michael Eisenberg, an assistant professor of urology, "whether they were married or single and whether or not they had kids."

***"Frequent marijuana use doesn't seem to impair sexual motivation or performance. If anything, it's associated with increased coital frequency."*** – Dr. Michael Eisenberg  
*Stanford University*

Dr. Eisenberg, and lead

author Dr. Andrew Sun, a Stanford urology resident, make it clear that they're *not saying* smoking more marijuana leads to having more sex. But that message can easily be missed in the shallow, surface mainstream reporting sure to come in the days ahead.

All this said, as we mull over the findings there are a few limitations to the study to keep in mind:

- First, does smoking pot encourage people to have more sex? Or are those who have sex more frequently predisposed to smoke marijuana?
- The period being studied was just the four weeks prior to the survey. So what we're examining here is a snapshot of each subject's life, which may not be fully representative.
- The research only tracked heterosexual sex for both genders, which could exclude some homosexual incidents of sex and skew the results.
- And, as is always the issue with surveys, the data is self-reported and subject to be under- or over-stated. And when it comes to inquiring about someone's sexual prowess, instances of exaggeration cannot be overlooked.

Finally, another point worth considering. Dr. Eisenberg states that "Frequent marijuana use doesn't seem to impair sexual motivation or performance. If anything, it's associated with increased coital frequency." However, if pot use is linked to increased arousal, that may not favorably translate to greater sexual satisfaction for men. That's because [studies have shown](#) <sup>[4]</sup> that ingesting too much cannabis can decrease sperm count or make achieving an orgasm more difficult. By extension, that development can't be too enjoyable for their partners, either.

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**Links**

[1] <https://herb.co/2015/05/28/sex-and-weed-couples-who-smoke-together-have-more-fun/>

[2] <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nsfg/index.htm>

[3] [http://www.jsm.jsexmed.org/article/S1743-6095\(17\)31417-0/abstract](http://www.jsm.jsexmed.org/article/S1743-6095(17)31417-0/abstract)

[4] <https://academic.oup.com/aje/article/182/6/473/82600/Association-Between-Use-of-Marijuana-and-Male>