Alcohol, Marijuana, and Inhalant Fact Sheet

Drug	Source	How the Drug is Used	Negative Effects on the Body	How the Drug Works
Marijuana	From the dried leaves and flowers of the cannabis plant	Smoked, baked into brownies or cookies, or brewed like tea	Impairs memory, concentration, perception, and movement	Acts on receptors in the brain, causing increased blood pressure and heart rate, sleepiness, and disruption in attention
Alcohol	Found in beer, wine, and liquor	Consumed by drinking	Impairs concentration, slows reflexes (impaired reaction time), reduces coordination, and causes drowsiness when used in excess	Impacts many neurotransmitters in the brain. Alcohol increases turnover of the neurotransmitters dopamine and norepinphrine and alters the function of other neurotransmitters. Long-term use can lead to a reduction in brain size and numerous neurological problems
Inhalants	Found in rubber cement, paint thinner, fingernail polish remover, and pressurized cans of hair spray and whipped cream	Fumes are either sniffed or inhaled	Decrease coordination and cause a kind of stupor; thinking, memory, and the ability to learn are affected. Can cause fatal heart failure within minutes of using. This is known as "sudden sniffing death."	Inhalants can damage the myelin sheath - the covering of neurons that help nerve impulses travel. This can result in problems in nerve cell communication and death of nerve cells. Inhalants can also activate the dopamine system, which is involved in feelings of reward.