

FOR COGNITION, EVIDENCE AGAINST MARIJUANA MOUNTING

April 17, 2014 / The Sports Psychiatrist



For aspiring & current athletes, or those who are generally looking for peak cognitive performance, the evidence against the use of marijuana is mounting. I often hear in my clinical practice, "I only smoke a couple of times a week". While many studies to date have looked at the negative impact of heavy marijuana use, [this study in the Journal of Neuroscience](#) (highlighted in USA Today) showed detrimental effects in even 'casual' users. Furthermore, the impact on the brains of young and 'emerging' adults ("*The brain continues to develop well into the 20's, and even into the 30's*" - Hans Breiter, MD at the Northwestern University School of Medicine) is of particular concern:

"There have been a growing number of studies that suggest that marijuana use in emerging adults is associated with differences in brain structure and cognitive abilities". - Staci Gruber, Associate Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School; Director of Cognitive and Clinical Neuroimaging Core at McLean Hospital

My general advice for those looking to optimize cognitive performance: avoid marijuana.