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Letters to the Editor

Take a harder look at marijuana

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The Nov. 18 Health & Science commentary “PTA mom says it’s time to legalize marijuana ” contained a good deal of parenting advice but not much science. As the debate on marijuana continues, it is critical that science be part of the discussion. Today’s marijuana is much stronger than in decades past, and new research is raising concerns.

A long-term study found that heavy marijuana use in teens resulted in an IQ loss of eight points and that teens are at risk of dependency and going on to use harder drugs. Marijuana smoke contains numerous carcinogens. A 20-year research study found that marijuana use doubles the risk of psychotic disorder and leads to poor attention and memory. Drugged driving significantly increased the risk of motor vehicle collisions.

Years ago, people thought smoking cigarettes was harmless, too. The public deserves accurate information about the health effects of marijuana use, and more research is needed. Let’s not look back with regret and say, “I’d wish I’d known.”

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