

Reducing the problems of gunja

For your health and your community it is safest not to use gunja.

But if you do:

- avoid using or being stoned near kids
- cut down how often and how much you use
- don't mix gunja with alcohol or other drugs
- buy food and pay bills first – never go into debt for gunja
- have gunja free days and events
- if smoking take small puffs, don't hold smoke in your lungs
- clean your pipe or bong to stop germs spreading and don't share pipes, bongs or joints if you are crook
- remember plastic, rubber and dry/can bongs give off bad chemicals
- don't drive or use machines when stoned

Remember

if you are pregnant or planning to have a baby, gunja can harm your baby

if you have schizophrenia, depression or anxiety, gunja may make it worse

if you are under 18, your brain is still growing and gunja can really cause damage to your brain

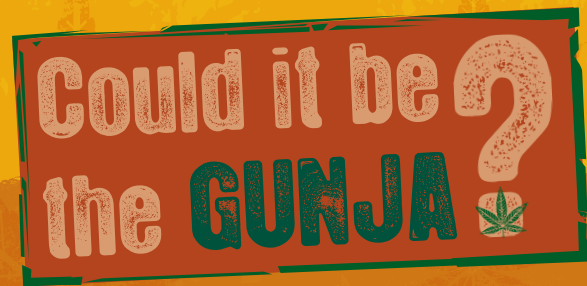
For more information talk to:



Supported by the Australian Government
Images by Patrick Bayly, Workspace Design

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Thinking about cutting down or quitting the gunja?



Gunja isn't our culture, it harms our spirit



Gunja is a problem for many people in the community. If you use it, here is some information about what it is like to cut down and to quit.



Things people like about gunja

- relaxing – takes the edge off
- hanging out with friends
- feels good
- something to do

Things about gunja that aren't good

- it isn't cultural way
- not good for babies
- feel down more often
- trouble concentrating
- spend too much money
- get forgetful and feel slack
- causes problems with lungs and breathing
- feel stressed when you don't get it, need it all the time
- get in trouble with Aboriginal Law and the police
- cultural responsibilities not met
- makes it hard to stop smoking tobacco
- get angry and get into fights when you don't have it
- stop doing things with family and community
- can make heart problems and blood pressure worse
- have more accidents, like crashing car or work accidents
- get paranoid, jealous or freak out when stoned



Some ways gunja affects the community



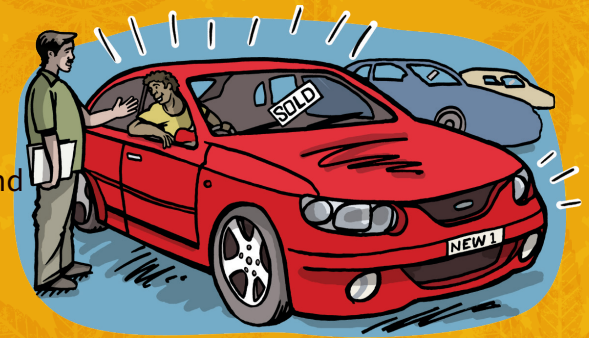
- kids think it's 'normal' to use
- kids don't do so well school, they stop playing sport and stop learning traditional ways
- families fight about gunja
- stories and language are forgotten and not passed on

Choosing to cut down or quit

If you want to change the way gunja affects you and your family you can choose to cut down or quit the gunja. But which is the best choice for you? Think about the good and bad things about each choice, which one is achievable and which will help you and your family the most.

What's good about quitting

- **family** more time to be with family, family proud of you
- **life** feel in control of life, do things that make you happy
- **money** less money worries, not in debt to dealers, save money and spend it on good things like fishing, camping or a new car
- **mood** not anxious or paranoid, feel good more often
- **health** feel healthy in your body, spirit and mind



What's hard about quitting

Some people can find quitting gunja hard because the body and mind gets used to it having it.

- **withdrawal** when you stop having gunja you might have trouble sleeping and feel restless or angry. This can be hard but it shows the body is healing and it will soon pass.
- **friends and family** it can be hard to say no to people you usually smoke gunja with – they might take a while to get used to you not smoking too.

But... getting help from others can help you feel strong. Spend time with people who don't use and talk to people who have quit or cut down.