

Effects Of Marijuana On The Brain

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Abstract

Marijuana (Cannabis) is the gateway drug to other drugs and can lead to severe addiction that may result in mortality; however, in recent years, there has been a growing debate to make it legal as it has medicinal benefits. This may be true, but the negative impact of cannabis is much higher than the benefits. The effects of marijuana on the brain cannot be ignored as it affects neuropsychiatric functioning, disrupts the hippocampus, affects the prefrontal cortex and damages the psychomotor controls. It clouds the person's judgment and affects their mood as well. These are some of the adverse effects of cannabis, and compared to these, the advantages are next to none. In this regard, making marijuana legal will be very irresponsible as the number of drug users will increase, and the damage will be irreversible and difficult to contain. It would be better to make marijuana legal only for medicinal use by doctors.

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Introduction

Marijuana is one of the highly illicit drugs which can have adverse effects on the cognitive abilities of the brain. It is cultivated from a plant called cannabis and then is either smoked, vaped or eaten. The majority of people use it for pleasure or recreational purposes, but recently, doctors have been prescribing it to patients to alleviate their pain, certain medical conditions and symptoms. It is a mind-altering compound and can be highly dangerous if taken more than the recommended amount. Presently there is a growing debate that it should be made legal to use marijuana as it has medicinal benefits, however, it also affects the brain causing neuropsychiatric problems so making it legal is not as easy. This paper will discuss the effects of marijuana on the brain extensively to see if the cons outweigh the medicinal benefits of marijuana.

Discussion

Marijuana is one of the most highly used drugs in the United States, and so much so that even high school students have access to it. The use has become so widespread that it has caused concerns for the government as it is seen as a gateway drug to addiction and other potentially more harmful drugs. It can significantly alter the mood of the user and put them in a sense of euphoria. Other effects that it has include clouded judgment, hallucination, impairing of the brain, and harm to the

lungs and heart. Consuming marijuana increases the risk of alcoholism and leads to intoxication and even death. However, some of these adverse effects are used positively by doctors to cure some of the symptoms in the patients. One of the biggest uses is that consuming marijuana causes hunger, which is used to help patients suffering from AIDS, cancer, etc., gain weight that they have lost due to their illness (Rong et al., 2017).

In another study, the impact of marijuana was studied concerning HIV. This was done as both marijuana and HIV disrupt the neuropsychiatric workings of the brain. A sample size of 78 adults was taken, which included 20 people affected by HIV and marijuana, 17 only by marijuana, 20 by HIV and the rest at different stages of HIV. This study showed that when present individually, HIV and marijuana impact the brain adversely; however, when these are present simultaneously in a patient, then their effect synchronizes to facilitate the brain's function back to its normal working state. This can help in restoring the cognitive abilities of the patient. However, more in-depth research is required to find out the amount of marijuana consumption that would be helpful to gain benefits from it (Hall et al., 2021).

These benefits that are now being researched still need to be investigated further as marijuana has been a cause for concern for a long time and cannot be legalized on the terms of few benefits. Fifty per cent of the cannabis inhaled goes directly into the lungs, and the rest goes into the bloodstream to the brain. The effects that it has on the functioning of the brain can be observed in minutes. As previously mentioned, marijuana is easily obtainable by high school students, and as their brains are still in the process of developing, it can cause severe damage to the brain, preventing it from developing properly. It has been proven that cannabis causes a decline in cognitive abilities as it causes neurological changes that are similar to schizophrenia. It disrupts the hippocampus and affects the development of the prefrontal cortex, which is extremely important for creating memories and making decisions. Psychomotor controls are also negatively impacted by marijuana, along with severe changes in mood (Wadieh et al., 2017).

Conclusion

The advantages of marijuana are very limited. However, the disadvantages are vast and severe. It would not be wise to make marijuana legal as the repercussions of it will be extremely negative, and preventing people from abusing the use of cannabis would be impossible. The brain is the most important organ of the body as it controls the whole body; however, if the control centre of the body gets damaged, then survival of the rest of the body becomes difficult. If there is a need to make it legal, then it should only be made legal for medicinal purposes and be used only by medical professionals to administer it to patients. This will provide a controlled environment and lower the risk of damage to the brain by allowing the patient to benefit from the results. Making any drug legal just because they have medical benefits will never be a wise decision because the number of people who would use it for wrong will be higher than the ones who would use it for good.

References

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