EPP0004

Trends in cannabis consumption: psychotic and anxiety symptoms among users

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doi: 10.1192/j.eurpsy.2024.247

Introduction: During cannabis use, some individuals may experience psychotic symptoms, such as unusual perceptions or irrational thoughts, including mild hallucinations or temporary paranoia. Anxiety is also common, characterized by excessive worry or intense fear. The occurrence of these symptoms varies based on cannabis quantity, individual sensitivity, and surroundings. Although not all users experience these effects, the link between cannabis and psychotic or anxiety symptoms highlights the need for a thorough risk assessment.
Objectives: Our goal is to analyze trends in cannabis use, as well as the psychotic and anxiety symptoms experienced by users, and to examine whether cannabis use is associated with other substances consumption.
Methods: We collected demographic and substance consumption data from two groups: 29 individuals aged 18 to 28 who had tried cannabis at least once and 19 regular consumers through a structured questionnaire.
Results: Regular cannabis consumers had a higher proportion of males than those who had tried it once ($X^2_{(1)}$=4.81; p=0.028). There were no significant differences in age, alcohol or tobacco consumption between the groups. Notably, regular cannabis consumers had a history of using other illegal drugs, both in the past and within the last month ($X^2_{(1)}$=8.53; p=0.003). Regarding cannabis effects, regular users more frequently reported sensations like euphoria, relaxation, altered time perception, tachycardia, motor coordination difficulties, and impaired clear thinking compared to one-time users ($X^2_{(1)}$=10.12; p=0.001). Regarding anxiety symptoms during cannabis consumption, both groups experienced a similar frequency. Finally, regular cannabis consumers reported strange ideas or perceptions more often than one-time users ($X^2_{(1)}$=0.743; p=0.019). However, the associated discomfort level was similar in both groups.
Conclusions: This study highlights that regular cannabis use is associated with a greater likelihood of using other substances and experiencing more pronounced effects, including psychotic symptoms. However, it doesn't necessarily lead to increased anxiety symptoms compared to one-time users. It's important to acknowledge that the relationship between cannabis and psychosis is intricate and influenced by factors like consumption quantity and individual sensitivity. These findings stress the importance of understanding cannabis's impact on mental health and its connection to the use of other substances.

Disclosure of Interest: None Declared

Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

EPP0006

The Potential Cardiovascular Benefits of Physical Exercise in Early Onset Psychosis and Bipolar Disorder

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doi: 10.1192/j.eurpsy.2024.248

Introduction: Early onset psychosis (EOP) and bipolar disorder (EOBP), occurring before the age of 18, have been linked to early signs of atherosclerosis and an elevated risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD). Physical exercise is a well-established factor in reducing the risk of developing CVD. However, it remains unclear whether regular physical activity can mitigate cardiovascular risk factors and signs of atherosclerosis in individuals with EOP and EOBP.
Objectives: This study aimed to explore the impact of physical exercise on cardiovascular risk factors in these populations.
Methods: We assessed the physical exercise habits of 71 individuals, including 22 with EOP, 21 with EOBP, and 28 age-matched healthy controls. Participants' physical exercise routines were categorized as 0, 1, 2, or 3 or more times per week, with each session lasting at least 30 minutes. Our analysis included adjustments for conventional CVD confounders. Additionally, we used high-frequency ultrasound (22 MHz) to evaluate different layers of the arterial wall in the left common carotid artery (LCCA).
Results: Compared to the control group, adolescents with EOP and EOBP exhibited significantly thicker LCCA intima thickness (0.132 vs. 0.095 mm, p<0.001) and intima/media ratio (0.24 vs. 0.17, p<0.001). Remarkably, adolescents with EOP and EOBP who engaged in physical exercise three times or more weekly (n=13) displayed significantly less intima thickness (0.142 vs. 0.116 mm, p<0.01). However, we did not observe a significant association between exercise and other CVD risk factors. Even when considering factors such as the extent of antipsychotic medication use or the severity of the disorders in our regression analysis, the significant association between exercise and reduced intima thickness persisted (p<0.05).
Conclusions: Among adolescents with EOP or EOBP, those who engaged in physical exercise three or more times weekly exhibited less pronounced LCCA intima thickness compared to their less active counterparts, although it remained thicker than that of healthy controls. These findings, if replicated, suggest that regular physical exercise, specifically three or more times a week, could potentially offer protection against the future development of CVD in individuals with EOP and EOBP. Further research is warranted to confirm and expand upon these promising results.

Disclosure of Interest: None Declared