Health consequences of acute and chronic marihuana use.

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Abstract

Chemical content, assay procedures, and pharmacokinetics of cannabis sativa are discussed briefly. Cannabinoid cellular effects relating to chromosomes and immunity including cellular metabolism and allergic reactions are presented. Gross and microscopic brain pathology due to cannabis use is reviewed involving EEG alterations, psychopathology including aggressive behaviour as well as properties of psychomotor impairment, tolerance and dependence. Cardiopulmonary effects of marihuana are recorded under pulmonary pharmacological effects including the macrophage defense system and effects of smoke constituents; under cardiovascular effects cardiac toxicity and possible mechanism of action are discussed. Alterations of reproductive hormonal production and maturation of reproductive cells by marihuana in males and females with attendant impairment of reproductive function or fertility including reproductive outcome are reported. Field studies with healthy chronic cannabis users in Jamaica, Greece and Costa Rica are related as to observed medical alterations. Potential clinical effects are summarized in point form.