

Cannabis use and the increased risk of psychosis: The debate continues

January 11 2013

The scientific community have long debated the causal relationship between *cannabis* use and the risk factor for psychotic illnesses such as schizophrenia. Both sides of this controversial subject are put forward in two articles published today in *F1000 Medicine Reports*. To give rise to the debate, the authors of each article were given the opportunity to read the opposing side's article drafts and consider their arguments when structuring their own article.

In his article "[Cannabis and psychosis: what causes what?](#)" David Castle of the University of Melbourne argues for a causal link between *cannabis* use and an increased risk of [psychotic symptoms](#). He does, however, concede that very few cases of schizophrenia would be prevented by a global abolition of *cannabis*, an argument put forward by Suzanne Gage, Stan Zammit and Matt Hickman of the Universities of Bristol and Cardiff in their article entitled "[Stronger evidence is needed before accepting that cannabis plays an important role in the aetiology of schizophrenia in the population.](#)"

Gage et al argue that whilst acute psychotic experiences can be linked to *cannabis* use, the nature of the connection to schizophrenia inevitably remains much less certain. They argue that more robust evidence is required to determine whether preventing *cannabis* use will have any substantial impact on preventing [psychotic disorders](#) in the population, or within specific high-risk subgroups.

In their conclusions, both sides agree that *cannabis* is a public health

concern and that the public should be made fully aware of the risks associated with using the drug. Castle states that this particularly applies to those who have a family history of [schizophrenia](#) or who have experienced [psychosis](#)-like symptoms, as they may be at greater risk.

Provided by Faculty of 1000: Biology and Medicine

Citation: Cannabis use and the increased risk of psychosis: The debate continues (2013, January 11) retrieved 19 November 2023 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-01-cannabis-psychosis-debate.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.