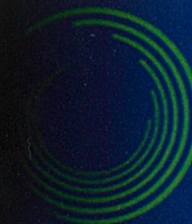


# Does Cannabinoid Use During Adolescence Increase The Risk Of Psychosis and Other Long-Term Consequences?



**OTAGO**  
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## Research Question

Does Cannabinoid Use During Adolescence Increase The Risk Of Psychosis and Other Long-Term Consequences?

## Introduction

- Evidence that cannabinoid use may link to an increase in psychotic symptoms has been amassing over the past few years. Adolescent brains are distinctive from adult brains due to anatomical and neurochemical differences, adolescence is also a critical phase for cerebral development and therefore strong stimulation by psychoactive substances during this period of brain development may lead to long-lasting neurological changes during the transition to adulthood.

- psy·cho·sis  
n. pl. psy·cho·ses
- A severe mental disorder, with or without organic damage; characterized by derangement of personality and loss of contact with reality and causing deterioration of normal social functioning.

## Clinical Issue

Client Arrives

Complex Individual Needs Assessed  
- Problems with cannabinoid use identified

Client worried about implications of his drug use

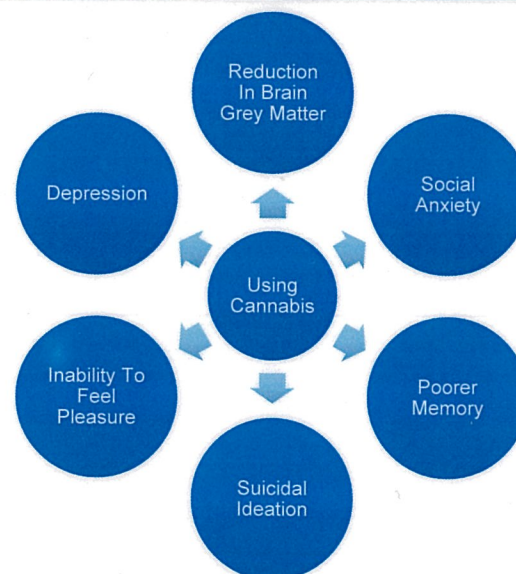
Research the long term consequences of Cannabinoid use.

Determine how this clinical issue might implicate in Nursing

## Psychosis Risk

- A Swedish population study on the risk of developing schizophrenia, due to cannabinoid use, found that when cannabinoids were used on at least 50 occasions the likelihood of developing schizophrenic symptoms increased 6-fold. It is thought that 8% of the cases of schizophrenia could be prevented by the removal of cannabinoid use within the population and the risk of developing psychotic symptoms is even higher in youths who have predispositions for psychosis.

## Behaviour and Mental Implications



## What This Means For Nurses

- Fergusson and Boden (2011) suggest that by the age of 21, approximately 80% of young people will have used a cannabinoid substance, this will likely affect nursing by placing increased strain on the mental health and primary health sectors.

## Rationale

Adults Who Use Cannabis 100+ times a year



- 18-25yrs
- 26-34yrs
- 35-49yrs
- 50+

- <http://stash.norml.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/us-adult-heavy-use-by-age.jpg>
- By educating adolescents around the dangers and potential long term consequences, we could hypothetically decrease the implications of cannabinoid use on adolescents: increased crime rates, depression etc., and we could also help reduce the number of adolescents who continue to use drugs when they move into adulthood.

## Conclusion

- The risks associated with cannabinoid use are widely documented and proven across the adolescent developmental stage. The long-term consequences of psychoses, behavioural and mental difficulties are shown to be both severe and mostly, irreversible.

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