

HANDBOOK OF CANNABIS AND RELATED PATHOLOGIES

BIOLOGY, PHARMACOLOGY, DIAGNOSIS, AND TREATMENT

Edited by

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Preface

Cannabis is probably one of the most commonly used drugs of misuse. It has a wide range of adverse effects including impairing learning and memory. At the same time, the medical use of cannabis has been advocated due to its ability to relieve pain as an example. Understanding the nature of the pleasureseeking, disinhibition, and other effects have also paved the way for the specialized field of cannabis pharmacology. This includes elucidating the nature of cannabinoid receptors, which has led to the development of synthetic cannabinoid agonists. However, the aforementioned is a rather simplistic synopsis. The long-term use of cannabis may also increase the risk of schizophrenia, paranoia, and other psychoses. Its use can affect cells, organs, individuals, families, subcultures, groups, and communities. This is because the interrelationships between cannabis and individual components, diagnosis, screening, social and community effects, psychopathology, neuropathology, non-CNS effects, polydrug use, medicinal applications, treatments, and pharmacology are complex. Furthermore, although the active agents in cannabis are known, the individual steps between exposure by ingestion or inhalation and effects on cells and the body are multifactorial, and cut across many scientific disciplines. It is thus important to learn from these interrelationships to embrace a multidisciplinary approach to understand all the threads and ramifications of cannabis use, misuse, and applications. For example, some cellular mechanisms elucidated by studying one anatomical CNS component may also be relevant to other areas of the CNS, or other fields of cannabis toxicity and pharmacology. Another example relates to the impact of cannabis on social dysfunction, which may also be relevant to other psychosocial scenarios, or useful in devising new treatment strategies. An additional example relates to preclinical studies which may be relevant to understanding clinical pathologies, psychomorbidities, or therapeutic drugs. Unraveling these complex relationships is difficult, as there is a wide myriad of material related to cannabis. In simple terms, the material on cannabis use and misuse has hitherto been either scattered, diffused, or crosses different disciplines. These limitations are, however, addressed in *The Handbook of Cannabis and Related Pathologies: Biology, Pharmacology, Diagnosis, and Treatment* which embraces all aspects of cannabis in a one-stop-shop approach. Where appropriate, positive aspects of cannabis and related metabolites are described.

The book is divided into eight major parts as follows:

- **1.** Setting the Scene, Botanical, General, and International Aspects
- Personal, Social, and Community Aspects of Cannabis Use
- **3.** Cannabis, Behavior, Psychopathology, and Neuropathology
- 4. Cannabis, Organs, Tissues, and non-CNS Aspects
- 5. Pharmacology and Cellular Activities of Cannabinoids and Endocannabinoids
- **6.** Effects of Specific Natural and Synthetic Cannabinoids
- 7. Medicinal Cannabis Use
- 8. Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatments

The Editor recognizes the difficulties in ascribing chapters to particular sections, and even their location within separate sections. This is because some chapters can be categorized in many ways. However, this issue is resolved with the excellent indexing carried out by Elsevier.

The Handbook of Cannabis and Related Pathologies: Biology, Pharmacology, Diagnosis, and Treatment transcends both multiple disciplinary and intellectual divides, as each chapter has:

- Key Facts
- · Mini-Dictionary
- Summary Points

Finally, there is a chapter on Resources and Recommended Reading, suggested by some of the book's contributors.

The Handbook of Cannabis and Related Pathologies: Biology, Pharmacology, Diagnosis, and Treatment has been designed for those working in the field of cannabis and cannabinoids, drug abuse workers, neurologists, specialists in addictive behaviors, health scientists, public health and community workers, doctors,

XXVI PREFACE

pharmacologists, research scientists, and other specialists. The book is valuable as a personal reference book, and also for academic libraries that cover the domains of health sciences or addictions. Contributions are from leading national and international experts, including those from world renowned institutions. It is suitable

for undergraduates, postgraduates, lecturers, and academic professors.

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Contents

List of Contributors Preface	xv xxv	9. Cannabis, Migration, and Psychosis Onset A. KOKONA, I. TARRICONE, M. DI FORTI, E. CARRA	79
SETTING THE SCENE, BOTANICA GENERAL AND INTERNATIONA		10. The Global Epidemiology and Disease Burden of Cannabis Use and Dependence L. DEGENHARDT, A.J. FERRARI, W.D. HALL	89
ASPECTS 1. The Cannabis Plant: Botanical Aspects S. FARAG, O. KAYSER	3	11. International Aspects of Cannabis Use and Misuse: the Australian Perspective D.J. ALLSOP, W.D. HALL	101
2. The Biosynthesis of Cannabinoids E DEGENHARDT, E STEHLE, O. KAYSER	13	12. International Aspects of Cannabis Use and Misuse: Egypt O.M.E. ABDEL-SALAM, A.F. GALAL, S.A. ELSHEBINEY, A.E.D.M. GAAFAR	110
3. Increasing Plant Concentrations of THC and Implications on Health Related Disorders V. VINDENES, J. MØRLAND	24	13. Cannabis Body Packing: A Caribbean Perspective S.O. CAWICH, D. DAN, V. NARAYNSINGH	122
4. Age as a Predictor of Cannabis Use D. BERGEN-CICO, R.D. CICO	33	II	
	33 44	PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY ASPECTS OF CANNABIS USE	
 D. BERGEN-CICO, R.D. CICO 5. Lifetime Cannabis Use and Cognition in Psychosis Spectrum Disorders M.J. CUESTA, A.M. SÁNCHEZ-TORRES, R. LORENTE-OMEÑACA, 		PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY ASPECTS	131
 D. BERGEN-CICO, R.D. CICO 5. Lifetime Cannabis Use and Cognition in Psychosis Spectrum Disorders M.J. CUESTA, A.M. SÁNCHEZ-TORRES, R. LORENTE-OMEÑACA, L. MORENO-IZCO 6. A Profile of Synthetic Cannabinoid Users 	44	PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY ASPECTS OF CANNABIS USE 14. Gender Differences in Cannabis Use Disorders	131