Canabis Abuse and Treatment
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Cannabis is becoming an increasingly common substance of abuse by all age groups in the United States. The hazardous effects of this drug will become even more prominent with several states legalizing its use. To date, Colorado and Washington states have legalized the use of marijuana, with many more considering similar laws that would lift the ban on its use. Twenty other states have allowed the medical use of marijuana. With its legalization, the psychiatric effects of the drug, and the prevalence of psychotic and mood disorders attributable to it, are needed in order to prevent misdiagnosis of these disorders. This case serves as an example of the psychotic effects of the drug, which were treated with a short course of a low dose antipsychotic. Prevalence of cannabis abuse is estimated at about 4% worldwide, with as much as 1/4 to 1/3 of the adolescent population experimenting with it in most of developed countries. The active compound in cannabis, 9-tetrahydrocannabinol (9-THC), exerts its effects on the CB1 receptors in the brain, modulating activities of dopaminergic, GABAnergic and glutamatergic neurons, which in turn can produce psychotic symptoms. Based on recent research, it was demonstrated that increased cannabis use was associated with an increase in positive symptoms of psychosis. With the legalization of cannabis use and thus its increase in prevalence, it is crucial to understand the psychiatric effects of the drug and the prevalence of psychotic and mood disorders attributable to it, in order to prevent misdiagnosis of these disorders. Study of its burden on public mental and physical health will also be worthwhile.

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