

Daily Use, Especially of High-Potency Cannabis, Drives the Earlier Onset of Psychosis in Cannabis Users

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Cannabis use is associated with an earlier age of onset of psychosis (AOP). However, the reasons for this remain debated. Methods: We applied a Cox proportional hazards model to 410 first-episode psychosis patients to investigate the association between gender, patterns of cannabis use, and AOP. Results: Patients with a history of cannabis use presented with their first episode of psychosis at a younger age (mean years = 28.2, SD = 8.0; median years = 27.1) than those who never used cannabis (mean years = 31.4, SD = 9.9; median years = 30.0; hazard ratio [HR] = 1.42; 95% CI: 1.16–1.74; $P < .001$). This association remained significant after controlling for gender (HR = 1.39; 95% CI: 1.11–1.68; $P < .001$). Those who had started cannabis at age 15 or younger had an earlier onset of psychosis (mean years = 27.0, SD = 6.2; median years = 26.9) than those who had started after 15 years (mean years = 29.1, SD = 8.5; median years = 27.8; HR = 1.40; 95% CI: 1.06–1.84; $P = .050$). Importantly, subjects who had been using high-potency cannabis (skunk-type) every day had the earliest onset (mean years = 25.2, SD = 6.3; median years = 24.6) compared to never users among all the groups tested (HR = 1.99; 95% CI: 1.50–2.65; $P < .0001$); these daily users of high-potency cannabis had an onset an average of 6 years earlier than that of non-cannabis users. Conclusions: Daily use, especially of high-potency cannabis, drives the earlier onset of psychosis in cannabis users.