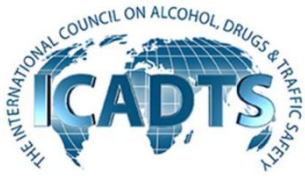


Cannabis and driving: Future perspectives

JG Ramaekers,
President-elect, International Council on Alcohol, Drugs and Traffic
Safety (ICADTS)





activities relating to cannabis and driving



ILLEGAL DRUGS AND DRIVING INCLUDING DESIGNER DRUGS

Chair: Marilyn Huestis

Co-chair: Steven W. Gust

[Contact the Illegal Drugs and Driving Working Group](#)

Goals:

- To identify what is known about the scope of the problem of drugs and driving
- To provide a discussion of the current status of political, legislative, and law enforcement efforts
- To make recommendations for new strategic initiatives and future research.
- To identify what is known about the scope of the problem of designer drugs and driving
- To provide a discussion of the current status of political, legislative and law enforcement efforts
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- ✓ Working group on illegal drugs and driving
- ✓ Support /host regional meetings
 - For Tox meeting Slovenia (2017)
 - IMIA symposium, Sydney (2017)
 - IALM symposium , Venice (2016)
 - more to come
- ✓ Need for ICADTS opinion papers on DUIC science and policies



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Epidemiological studies: Does cannabis increase crash risk?

Two major Case-Control studies in EU (2011) and US (2016) similar to the Borkenstein study for alcohol related crash risk.

Participating countries





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Future policy (problems) :

Users of cannabis with low levels of THC?

Zero tolerance laws: If any detectable amount of THC in a driver is considered a DUIC than all (regular) users of cannabis are by definition unfit to drive even at THC levels that have not been associated with impairment (< 2 ng/mL). Residual levels of THC can be detected for days or weeks in blood depending on cannabis use history.

- ✓ Need to distinguish impaired from unimpaired drivers
- ✓ Bridge the gap between THC at crash and time of blood collection



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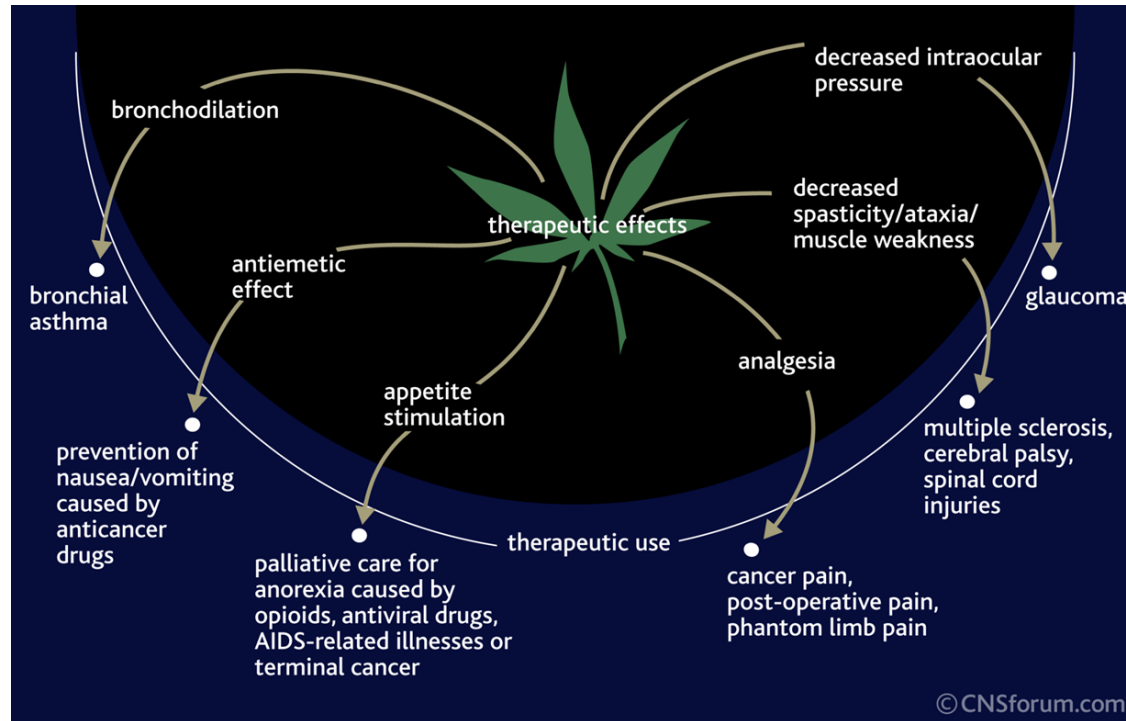
Future research:

Downward bias in epidemiological studies?

Epidemiological studies score case and control counts as positive using criteria that would also be satisfied by drivers with recent (or regular) cannabis use who were neither intoxicated nor impaired while driving (i.e. THC concentrations are low). As a consequence, crash estimates are biased downwards, and the actual risk associated with acute intoxication will be higher (Gjerde & Morland, 2016)

- ✓ Need for more accurate definition of DUIC in both cases and controls (i.e. THC levels that are associated with impairment).

Future policy (problems) : Medical use of cannabis?



- ✓ Need to balance therapeutic benefits and costs of impairment. Net effect may be neutral or even positive?
- ✓ Stop selling 'medicinal' cannabis to recreational users

Future policy evaluations

Introduction of 'per se' or impairment laws in many countries as well as the legalization of marijuana in the US, Canada and other countries will offer a unique opportunity to evaluate DUIC policies

- ✓ Does cannabis legalization increase cannabis use and DUIC?
- ✓ Is severity of penalties inversely related to frequency cannabis use?
- ✓ Prevention campaigns: are cannabis users sufficiently aware of the impairing properties of cannabis on driving and DUIC implications?

T2019

Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
August 18 - 21, 2019



22ND INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND TRAFFIC SAFETY CONFERENCE

Canada: legalization of marijuana across the country, likely in 2018. Many aspects of the legalization of marijuana are becoming more apparent with its legalization in jurisdictions in the United States and its forthcoming legalization in Canada. No doubt this will be a substantive topic of interest for the conference.

Key-findings and issues

- ✓ **Case-control studies:** Need for more accurate definition of DUIC in both cases and controls (i.e. THC levels that are associated with impairment).
- ✓ **Limits of impairment:** Need to distinguish impaired from unimpaired drivers
- ✓ **In practice :** Medicinal users?