THE BUSINESS OF HEALTH WARNING LABELS:
WHAT’S GOOD FOR ALCOHOL SHOULD BE GOOD FOR CANNABIS

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It’s all about timing

• Alcohol market:
  • we are trying to retro fit health labels in a restricted space… business wise and ‘bottle’ wise

• Cannabis market:
  • Get in early – avoid retro fit
  • Identify harm reduction/public health messages
    • Combustible route-of-administration
    • Cannabis use and pregnancy
    • Plain packaging, images, dosage (units?)…
  • Prepare for a challenge — evidence-based messages
• Largest anonymous online survey of people who use drugs
• GDS 2019: ~120,000 respondents
• Special section on cannabis and cannabis labels

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GLOBAL DRUG SURVEY 2020

CHANGING THE CONVERSATION TO MAKE DRUG USE SAFER

#KNOWDRUGSBETTER

https://www.globaldrugsurvey.com/
69% 83K people used any cannabis
Cannabis (THC) labels: 2019

We are interested in people’s attitudes towards cannabis health information labels presented on THC-containing cannabis products and whether these might raise awareness of risks and influence patterns of use.

Please have a look at the following labels/messages and tell us:

a) information is new to you (yes / no)
b) you believe in it (yes / no / unsure)
c) think of using less cannabis (yes / no / unsure)
Cannabis (THC) labels: 2019

Development

- GDS spoke experts and reviewed the literature.
- Reviewed current Canadian Cannabis Health warnings
- Reviewed past GDS findings on cannabis
- Reviewed GDS data on alcohol health warnings
- Considered balance between universal v targeted population labels and utilization of ‘side effects’ label in addition to ‘health warnings’
So what are the 6 labels…
About 1 in 10 people who use THC-containing cannabis develop a dependence. The risk of dependence is highest when smoked with tobacco or consumed as high-potency concentrates.
DON’T DRIVE STONED. CANNABIS USE DELAYS YOUR REACTION TIME AND IS ASSOCIATED WITH A TWO-FOLD INCREASE IN THE RISK OF FATAL CAR ACCIDENTS.
CANNABIS SMOKE IS HARMFUL. HARMFUL CHEMICALS FOUND IN TOBACCO SMOKE ARE ALSO FOUND IN CANNABIS SMOKE. THE SAFEST WAYS TO USE ARE VAPING OR EATING (IN LOW DOSES).
GROW YOUR BRAIN BEFORE YOU EXPAND IT. ADOLESCENTS UNDER THE AGE OF 21 ARE AT GREATER RISK OF HARMs FROM THC-CONTAINING CANNABIS. REGULAR CANNABIS USE AT AN EARLY AGE INCREASES THE RISK OF DEPENDENCE AND MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS. Adolescents
Cannabis side effects may include: Not getting stuff done.

Impaired motivation associated with cannabis use is the most common reason why people try to cut down or stop. Being stoned all day takes time away from you.
CANNABIS SIDE EFFECTS MAY INCLUDE:

ALWAYS FORGETTING STUFF

FORGETTING THINGS ALL THE TIME CAN BE A HASSLE AND CAN LEAD TO MISSED APPOINTMENTS OR LOST THINGS. BEING STONED CAN MAKE STUDYING HARDER AND LESS PRODUCTIVE. GIVE YOUR BRAIN SOME CANNABIS FREE TIME AND SEE THE DIFFERENCE.

Quitting: Memory
GDS sample
(completed all label questions and demographics)

• Over 60,000 respondents (restricted to countries with 250+ respondents)
• Mean age 27.4 years (SD 10.2)
• 70.5 male
% reporting ‘yes’ information was new

- **Dependence**: Male (28) > Female (32) > All (26)
- **Smoking**: Female (34) > Male (25) = All (21)
- **Adolescents**: Female (16) > Male (13) > All (12)
- **Memory**: Female (11) > Male (10) = All (9)
- **Driving**: Male (10) = Female (10) > All (9)
- **Motivation**: Female (10) = Male (10) > All (9)

Legend: All, Female, Male
% believed in the health warning information

<table>
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<th>Adolescents</th>
<th>Driving</th>
<th>Memory</th>
<th>Motivation</th>
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<th>Dependence</th>
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Adolescents, Driving, Memory, Motivation, Smoking, Dependence

Legend: All, Female, Male
% reporting label would make you consider using less

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<tr>
<td>Dependence</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Legend: Blue = All, Orange = Female, Gray = Male
Would you be happy to see such health messages on your legally purchased THC-containing cannabis products?
“Grow your brain before you expand it”

Adolescents under the age of 21 are at a greatest risk of harms from THC-containing cannabis. Regular use at an early age increases the risk of dependence and mental health disorders.
Don’t drive stoned
Cannabis use delays your reaction time and is associated with a two-fold increase in the risk of fatal car crashes.
Side effect: Not getting stuff done

Impaired motivation associated with cannabis use is the most common reason why people try to cut down or stop. Being stoned all day takes time away from you