EFFICACY OF NABIXIMOLS IN REDUCING FREQUENCY OF CANNABIS USE 3 MONTHS AFTER TREATMENT CESSION: RESULTS FROM A RANDOMISED CONTROLLED TRIAL.

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Introduction and Aims: Clinical interventions for reducing frequency of drug use are often only effective for as long as patients are actively receiving treatment. We examined follow-up data from the Sativex clinical trial to see whether reductions in cannabis use at the end of a 12-week course of nabiximols were maintained 3 months after treatment ceased.

Method: 128 cannabis-dependent participants received either nabiximols (n=61) or placebo (n=67) for 12 weeks. Number of Days used of illicit cannabis in the previous 28 days was measured at baseline, 12 weeks (end of treatment) and again at 24 weeks (3 months after treatment ceased).

Results: Days Used in Previous 28 days: A factorial mixed effects regression model for repeated measures (MMRM) revealed that, when controlling for all other time points, the nabiximols group used 6.8 fewer days in the previous 28 days at week 12 than the placebo group (p=0.002, CI: 2.1,11.4), and 6.7 fewer days in the previous 28 days at the week-24 follow-up than the placebo group (p=0.006, CI: 1.4,12.1).

Abstinence in Previous 28 days: Logistic regression revealed that, when controlling for days used at baseline, a significantly higher proportion of the nabiximols group (14/26; 54%) had achieved total abstinence in the previous 28 days at week-24 follow-up than had achieved abstinence in the placebo group (6/29; 21%) (OR=4.5, p=0.014, CI: 1.4,16.2).

Discussions and Conclusions: Results indicate that the benefits of nabiximols in reducing frequency of cannabis use during treatment may persist for up to 3 months after treatment has ceased, suggesting that nabiximols may be a useful addition to the options currently available to clinicians for treatment of cannabis dependence.

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