Pharmacotherapies for cannabis dependence?

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Introduction / Issues:
The Cochrane review of pharmacotherapies for cannabis dependence was first published in 2014. We contributed to an update of this review (in editorial review stage). There is still no established pharmacotherapy for cannabis dependence; this poster will review the medications that have been investigated, consider current directions in research, and major gaps in knowledge.

Method / Approach: This is a review of the types of medications that have been investigated for the treatment of cannabis dependence, and limitations of studies undertaken, drawing on the work undertaken to update the Cochrane review.

Key Findings: The medications that have been trialled are diverse, including THC preparations, various types of antidepressant, anxiolytics, a glutamatergic modulator, and the neuropeptide oxytocin. The updated review includes 21 studies of 10 different types of medication but as yet there is not sufficient evidence to support any particular pharmacotherapy for cannabis dependence. Limitations of the evidence include the small size of studies, varied reporting of outcomes, and the diversity of medications investigated.

Discussions and Conclusions: Several types of medication are potentially effective in the treatment of cannabis dependence, but further research is needed, and some types of medication are probably of little value.

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