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Cannabidiol in Anxiety and Sleep: A Large Case Series

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Abstract

Context: Cannabidiol (CBD) is one of many cannabinoid compounds found in cannabis. It does not appear to alter consciousness or trigger a "high." A recent surge in scientific publications has found preclinical and clinical evidence documenting value for CBD in some neuropsychiatric disorders, including epilepsy, anxiety, and schizophrenia. Evidence points toward a calming effect for CBD in the central nervous system. Interest in CBD as a treatment of a wide range of disorders has exploded, yet few clinical studies of CBD exist in the psychiatric literature.

Objective: To determine whether CBD helps improve sleep and/or anxiety in a clinical population.

Design: A large retrospective case series at a psychiatric clinic involving clinical application of CBD for anxiety and sleep complaints as an adjunct to usual treatment. The retrospective chart review included monthly documentation of anxiety and sleep quality in 103 adult patients.

Main outcome measures: Sleep and anxiety scores, using validated instruments, at baseline and after CBD treatment.

Results: The final sample consisted of 72 adults presenting with primary concerns of anxiety (n = 47) or poor sleep (n = 25). Anxiety scores decreased within the first month in 57 patients (79.2%) and remained decreased during the study duration. Sleep scores improved within the first month in 48 patients (66.7%) but fluctuated over time. In this chart review, CBD was well tolerated in all but 3 patients.

Conclusion: Cannabidiol may hold benefit for anxiety-related disorders. Controlled clinical studies are needed.

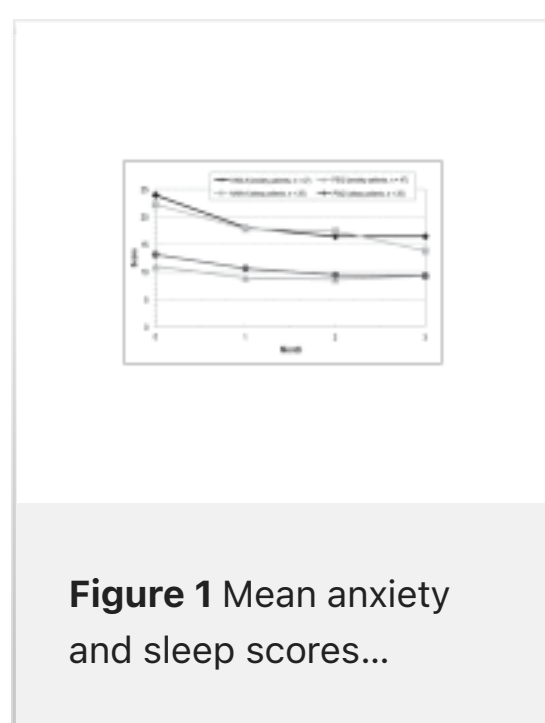
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Conflict of interest statement

Disclosure Statement

Dr Shannon has published several professional books on integrative mental health. Dr Shannon is a Principal Investigator for a Phase 3 study of 3,4-methylenedioxy-methamphetamine (MDMA)-assisted psychotherapy for severe posttraumatic stress disorder and receives compensation for his clinical work from the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies, Santa Cruz, CA. The other authors have no conflicts of interests to disclose.

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