



THE CONNECTION

IOWA GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL POLICY

ISSUE 4, DECEMBER 11, 2013—MARIJUANA FACTS—PART 1

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Many Iowans have heard about the “medical marijuana” programs in states like Colorado. What many don't realize is the “medical” marijuana is often the same crude street drug sold under names like AK 47, Black Witches Brew or Green Crank in a “medical” marijuana dispensary. In many ways it would be like putting the label “medical” on vodka and calling it “medical vodka”.

The American Medical Association recently reaffirmed its opposition to smoking marijuana. Many medical groups cite the lifelong harmful effects smoking marijuana can have, especially on youth.

Advocates of the medical use of the drug often cite compassion as their argument, and indeed no one wishes for another to suffer needlessly. To help people with severe med-

ical conditions who cannot find relief with other medications, the FDA has already approved several medicines derived from the cannabis plant. Several more are in the research and development phase.

In lieu of medical marijuana programs that are often a guise for people profiting from addictions, we should focus resources on developing safe, effective medications that meet FDA standards. Several of these are discussed in this issue of the Connection.

Sincerely,

Steven F. Lukan

POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *Welcome from Director Lukan*
- *CBD vs. THC*
- *Marinol & Cesamet*
- *Sativex & Epidiolex*

HELPFUL LINKS:

- *Iowa Substance Abuse Information Center*
www.drugfreeinfo.org
- *Office of Drug Control Policy*
www.iowa.gov/odcp
- *Partnership @ Drug Free Iowa.org*
www.drugfreeiowa.org
- *Iowa Poison Control Center*
www.iowapoisson.org

CBD vs. THC

Marijuana has many chemicals, the most well known of which is THC, or delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol.

Research and science have proven there is medical value in a different derivative of the marijuana plant called cannabidiol or CBD. CBD may have analgesic, anti-inflammatory, and anti-anxiety properties. However, unlike THC, CBD does not produce the psychoactive effects of feeling high or stoned.

Studies indicate that CBD could be effective in easing symptoms of a wide range of difficult-to-control conditions such as PTSD, epilepsy, and other.



MARINOL & CESAMET

Marinol (dronabinol) is a pill that contains lab-made THC. It is widely available at pharmacies to treat nausea/vomiting from cancer chemotherapy. Marinol has also been approved by the FDA for treatment of anorexia in AIDS patients.



Cesamet (nabilone) is a synthetic cannabinoid that mimics the THC found in cannabis. Cesamet was approved by the FDA because it was found to help certain patients. It is a medicine used for nausea and vomiting caused by cancer chemotherapy. It is used when other drugs have not been able to control these symptoms. Although it is not official indicated for chronic pain management, it is often used for that purpose. It is also approved for the use in treatment of anorexia and weight loss in AIDS patients.



SATIVEX & EPIDIOLEX

Epidiolex is an oral liquid formulation with a highly purified extract of plant-derived cannabidiol (CBD) as its active ingredient. GW Pharmaceuticals announced that it has been granted seven expanded access investigational new drug programs by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the treatment of 125 children suffering from intractable epilepsy syndrome in 2014. GW has also made arrangements to enable independent US pediatric epilepsy specialists to treat high need cases immediately. Epidiolex is THC-free, which ensures the children will not get “high” from the medicine.



Sativex is a cannabinoid mouth spray medicine approved in 20 countries, and in the process of being studied in the US. A decision from the FDA is expected in the next few months. The active components are delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and cannabidiol (CBD). Sativex is used for the symptomatic relief of neuropathic pain in multiple sclerosis in adults.

Source: GW Pharmaceuticals



IOWA GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL POLICY

Pape State Office Building
215 East 7th, Fifth Floor
Des Moines, IA 50319

Phone: 515-725-0300
Fax: 515-725-0304
E-mail: susie.sher@iowa.gov

WWW.IOWA.GOV/ODCP

Disclaimer: The information contained in this newsletter is for general information purposes only. The information is provided by ODCP and while we do everything possible to ensure accuracy, we make no representations or warranties of any kind, express or implied, about the completeness, accuracy, reliability, suitability, or availability with respect to the information contained for any purpose. Any reliance you place on such information is therefore strictly at your own risk.