



CBD Before Cannabis in Schizophrenia: An Important Safety Finding

One hypothesis in cannabinoid science has been that CBD might protect against some of the adverse psychiatric effects of THC. A recent clinical study tested that idea in a particularly relevant population.

Thirty people with schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder and coexisting cannabis use disorder participated in a randomized crossover trial. They received 1,000 mg oral CBD or placebo before inhaling THC-containing cannabis.

CBD did not protect against the acute effects of cannabis. Participants actually showed worse delayed verbal recall and a greater increase in positive psychotic symptoms after CBD pretreatment than after placebo pretreatment.

Potential application

This finding strongly argues against treating CBD as a universal “antidote” to THC. Cannabinoid interactions can depend on dose, route of administration and the population being studied. In people vulnerable to psychosis, cannabis use remains a significant clinical concern regardless of the presence of CBD.

Reference

Chesney E, Oliver D, Sarma A, et al. Does cannabidiol reduce the adverse effects of cannabis in schizophrenia? A randomised, double-blind, cross-over trial. *Neuropsychopharmacology*. 2025;50(12):1759–1767.

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