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# THE ROLE OF CANNABIS USE QUANTITY IN PREDICTING CANNABIS-RELATED PROBLEMS

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## Abstract

Cannabis use, while often deemed harmless, has been implicated in various social problems in both youth and adults. Our study introduces a new measure of cannabis quantity and examines whether it predicts cannabis-related social problems with and without controlling for frequency of use. While the “standard drink” concept is widely used as a standardized measure of alcohol consumption, there is no equivalent measure for cannabis consumption. This is likely due to challenges such as varied joint size, THC content and means of delivery. Our sample consisted of 665 participants aged 15 to 67 (mean =28.2, SD=11.8) from the British Columbia Alcohol and Other Drug Monitoring Project, High Risk Group Surveys (2008 to 2009). Cannabis-related problems, measured by the ASSIST, were predicted from cannabis use frequency (days in past month) and quantity (one joint = 0.5 g, five bong/pipe hits, 10 puffs), controlling for age and gender. Cannabis use frequency and quantity were positively associated with cannabis-related problems. Individuals who consumed cannabis daily and consumed more than one joint per day were at the greatest risk of problems. Controlling for frequency, the effect of quantity remained significant for failure to do what is expected due to cannabis use. Our study suggests that quantity, above and beyond frequency, is an important measure and predictor of cannabis problems. We discuss the potential usefulness and validity of this new measure in harm reduction.