

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CANNABINOIDS AND PSYCHOSIS

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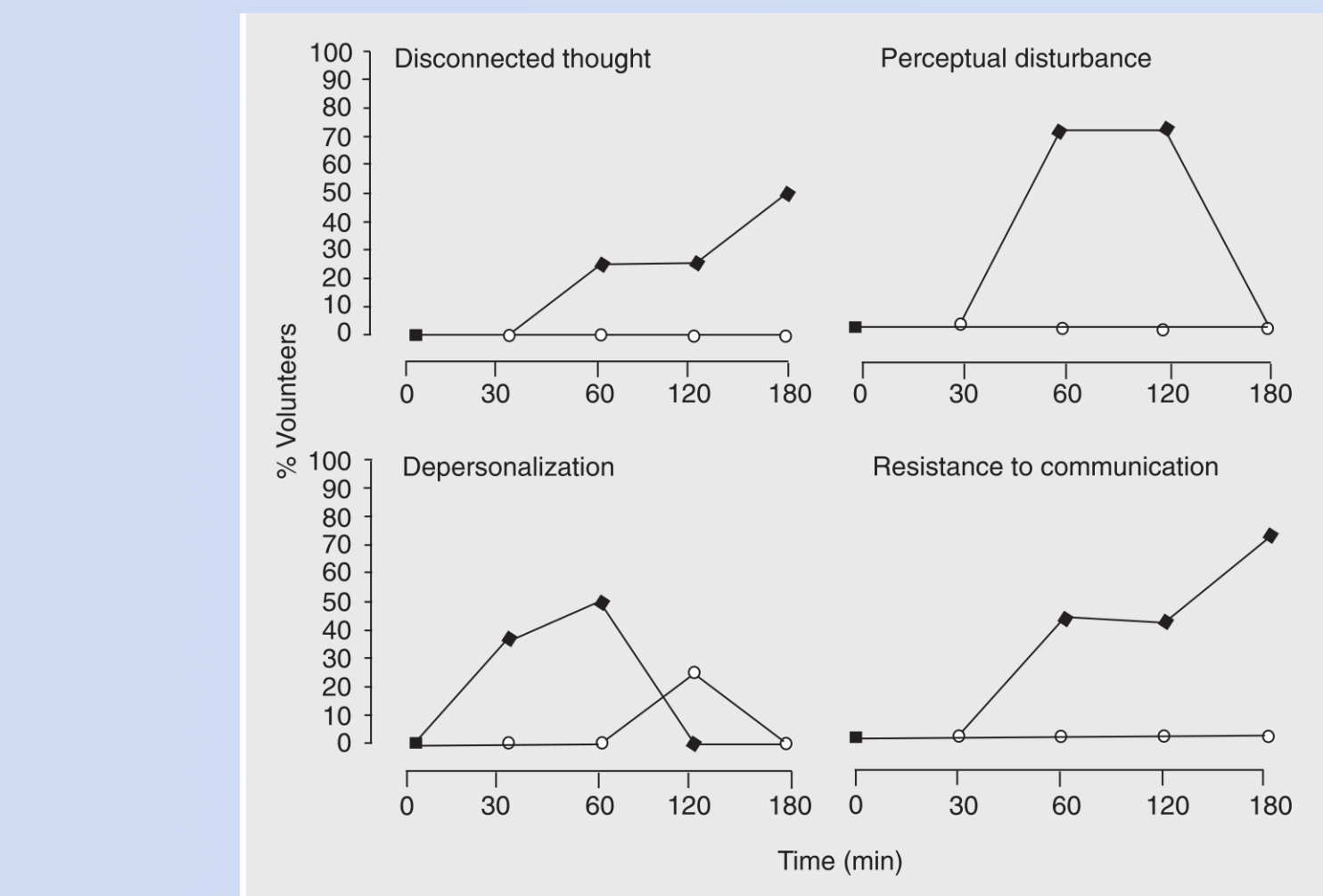
THESIS: THC can cause psychosis in a small percent of the population with psychotic predisposition, while CBD can reverse drug induced psychosis linked to THC and other classes of pro-psychotic drugs.

Table 1. Meta-analysis of Substance Use and Age at Onset of Psychosis Grouped by Substance, Sex, and Severity of Substance Use									
Group	Samples, No.	Effect Size, Standardized Mean Difference				Between-Sample Heterogeneity	Between-Group Heterogeneity	P(0)=.001; F=78.1	P(0)=.001
		Point Estimate	SE	Variance	95% CI				
All studies defined by substance use type									
Alcohol use	22	-0.28	-0.038	0.081	-0.196 to 0.120				
Cannabis use ^a	41 ^a	-2.70	-0.414	0.058	-0.526 to -0.301				
Substance use ^b	68 ^b	-2.90	-0.315	0.046	-0.405 to -0.225				
Overall	131	-1.73	-0.264	0.096	-0.453 to -0.075				
Studies reporting groups by sex									
Females	13	-3.40	-0.365	0.131	-0.622 to -0.108				
Males	24	-1.87	-0.325	0.096	-0.513 to -0.138				
Studies reporting groups of heavy or continued users vs lighter or discontinued users									
Lighter or discontinued use	10	-2.07	-0.301	0.113	-0.522 to -0.080				
Heavy or continued use	10	-2.72	-0.428	0.110	-0.644 to -0.211				

Table 2. Meta-regression and Multiple Meta-regression of Factors Associated With Heterogeneity in the Effect Size of Substance Use on the Age at Onset of Psychosis									
Factor	Samples, No. ^a	Point Estimate of Slope	SE of Slope	95% CI of Slope	Z Value	P Value	τ^2		
Meta-regression of sample characteristics									
Proportion using cannabis in substance-using group	114	-0.004	0.001	-0.006 to -0.002	-3.34	<.001	0.088		
Ratio of proportion of males in substance-using and control groups	102	-0.240	0.117	-0.469 to -0.011	-2.05	.04	0.089		
Proportion of all subjects with schizophrenia	119	0.002	0.002	-0.002 to 0.005	0.83	.41	0.113		
Meta-regression of methodological and quality characteristics									
Upper limit of age ≥ 45 y at presentation	26/131	-0.242	0.082	-0.402 to -0.081	-2.96	.003	0.102		
Some substance users in control group	55/131	0.020	0.071	-0.118 to 0.158	-0.28	.77	0.111		
Conducted at time of first episode of psychosis	61/131	-0.067	0.068	-0.202 to 0.068	-0.97	.33	0.107		
Defined onset as time of initial treatment	44/131	-0.023	0.075	-0.170 to 0.125	-0.30	.76	0.111		
Systematic measure for diagnosis and substance use	67/131	0.038	0.074	-0.106 to 0.182	0.52	.60	0.111		
Year of publication of studies	131	0.003	0.005	-0.007 to 0.014	0.66	.51	0.111		
Multiple meta-regression of factors found to be associated with between-study heterogeneity by meta-regression									
Ratio of proportion of males in substance-using and control groups		-0.253	0.142	-0.532 to 0.025	-1.78	.08			
Proportion of cannabis users	87 ^b	-0.004	0.001	-0.006 to -0.001	-2.83	.006			
Age ≥ 45 y at presentation		-0.216	0.089	-0.389 to -0.025	-2.44	.02			
Constant		0.422	0.210	0.010 to 0.834	2.01	.04			

Large's 2011 study performed a meta-data analysis on many studies and found a definite correlation between adolescent use of cannabis and a decrease in the age at onset of psychosis related disorders (mainly schizophrenia). The authors indicate that much of the raw scientific data derived from various studies did not indicate whether cannabis use predated the onset of psychosis, making the link a correlative rather than causal one. This means the authors cannot be sure if the psychosis increases the likelihood of cannabis use, or if the cannabis increases the likelihood of psychosis, an important distinction.

Large M, Sharma S, Compton MT, Slade T, Nielssen O (June 2011). "Cannabis use and earlier onset of psychosis: a systematic meta-analysis". Arch. Gen. Psychiatry 68 (6): 555-61. doi:10.1001/archgenpsychiatry.2011.5. PMID 21300939



Zuardi et al's 2006 study investigated CBD's anti-psychotic nature, and revealed its effects to be broadly anxiolytic and anti-psychotic. Although THC's ability to induce psychotic-like symptoms seems to suggest CBD's antagonist properties at the cannabinoid are solely responsible for its anti-psychotic properties, CBD's ability to reverse anxiety in cannabinoid-naïve subjects suggested otherwise. Amphetamine and ketamine induced psychosis in mice, (which effect the dopaminergic neurons (D2) and glutaminergic neurons (NMDA) respectively, were both reversed by CBD administration. This indicates that CBD's anti-psychotic effect may have a broader pharmacological basis than Cbl, D2, or NMDA antagonism alone. This is consistent with Campos et al's 2012 theory that the TRPV1 receptor (of which CBD is an agonist) is responsible for contributing to CBD's anti-psychotic effects. Additionally, Zuardi's team found that CBD was both a safe and efficacious alternative treatment for schizophrenia which was well tolerated.

Zuardi AW, Crippa JA, HallakJE, Moreira FA, Guimarães FS (April 2006)."Cannabidiol, a cannabinoid sativa constituent, as an antipsychotic drug". Braz. J. Med. Biol. Res. (Review) 39 (4): 421-9. doi:10.1590/S0100-879X2006000400001.PMID 16612464

Table 1 Epidemiological studies on cannabis use and schizophrenia									
Study	Study design	Gender	Number of patients	Follow-up (years)	Outcome	Diagnosis	Definition of cannabis use	Risk of schizophrenia	Adjusted OR (95% CI)
Davidson et al. 1998	Cohort study	Male	45/20	15	Incidence of schizophrenia	ICD-8	Used cannabis ≥ 10 times at age 18 years	3.3 (0.8-8.5)	3.3 (0.8-8.5)
Zammit et al. 2002	Cohort study	Male	58/53	27	Incidence of schizophrenia	ICD-8	Used cannabis ≥ 10 times at age 18 years	3.3 (0.8-8.5)	3.3 (0.8-8.5)
NEMESIS	Cohort study	Male and female	404	3	Incidence of schizophrenia	ICD-8	Used cannabis ≥ 10 times at age 18 years	3.3 (0.8-8.5)	3.3 (0.8-8.5)
Christensen et al. 2002	Cohort study	Male and female	10/11	17	Incidence of schizophrenia	ICD-8	Used cannabis ≥ 10 times at age 18 years	3.3 (0.8-8.5)	3.3 (0.8-8.5)
Durheim et al. 2002	Cohort study	Male and female	709	11	Incidence of schizophrenia	ICD-8	Used cannabis ≥ 10 times at age 18 years	3.3 (0.8-8.5)	3.3 (0.8-8.5)

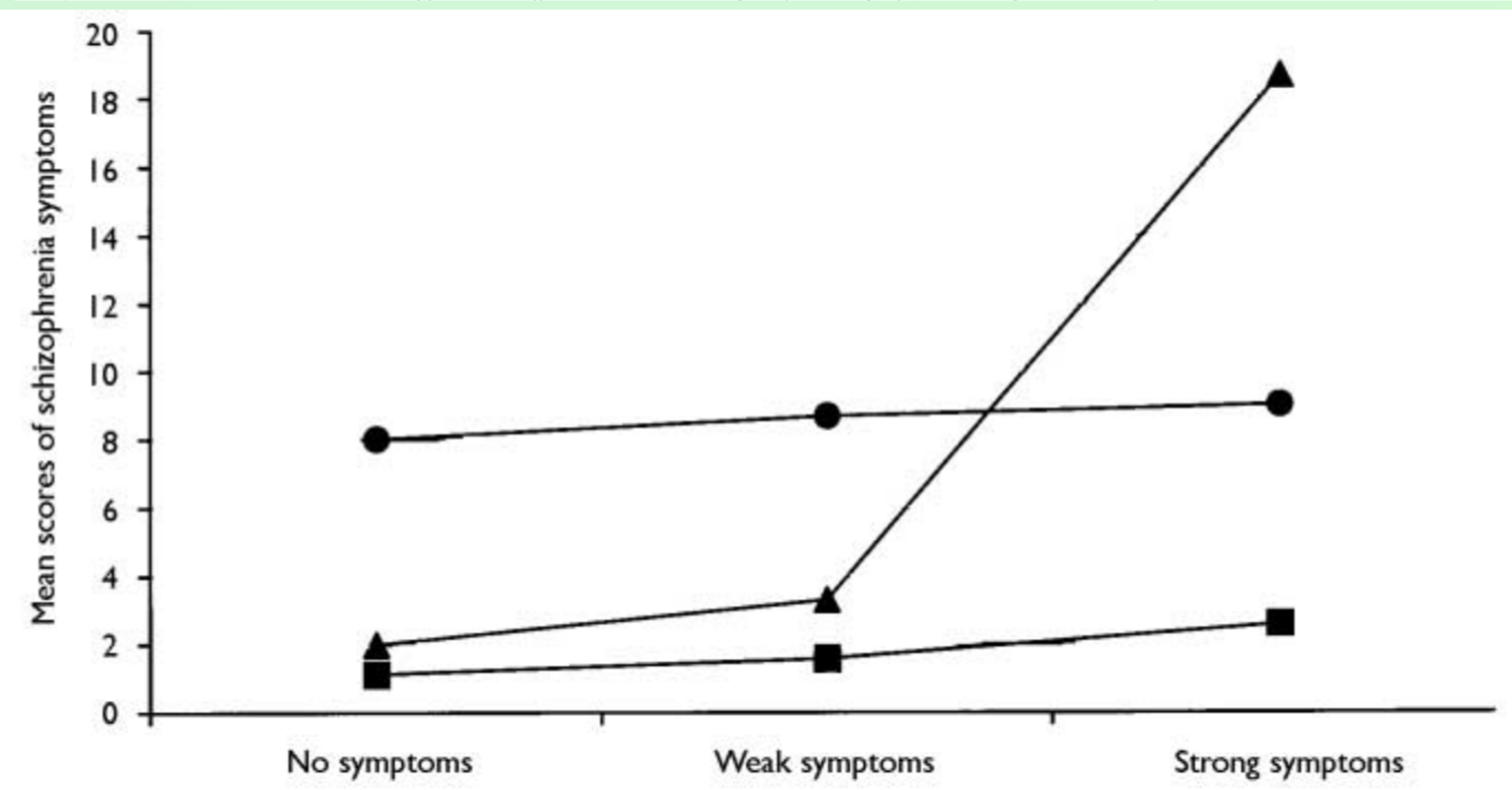


Figure 1 Interaction between cannabis use at age 18 years and psychotic symptoms at age 11 years in predicting adult schizophrenia symptoms. —■— controls; —●— users by age 15; —▲— users by age 18.

According to Arseneault's 2004 study, although cannabis use is correlated with earlier onset of psychosis in adolescents, they strongly indicate this phenomenon is only believed to occur in at-risk groups, such as family history of psychosis, or symptoms of psychosis predating cannabis use. This is difficult to prove because the mechanism of psychosis development in the brain is not well understood, and the role of cannabinoid receptors in this process is even less well known. An overall acceptance of the fact that cannabis use can exacerbate at-risk (of psychosis) youths pervades the literature on the subject. The author's language best describes the exact nature of the relationship: "Cannabis use appears to be neither a sufficient nor a necessary cause for psychosis. It is a component cause, part of a complex constellation of factors leading to psychosis.

Arseneault L, Cannon M, Witton J, Murray RM (2004). "Causal association between cannabis and psychosis: examination of the evidence". The British Journal of Psychiatry 184(2): 110-117. doi:-10.1192/bjp.184.2.110. PMID 14754822

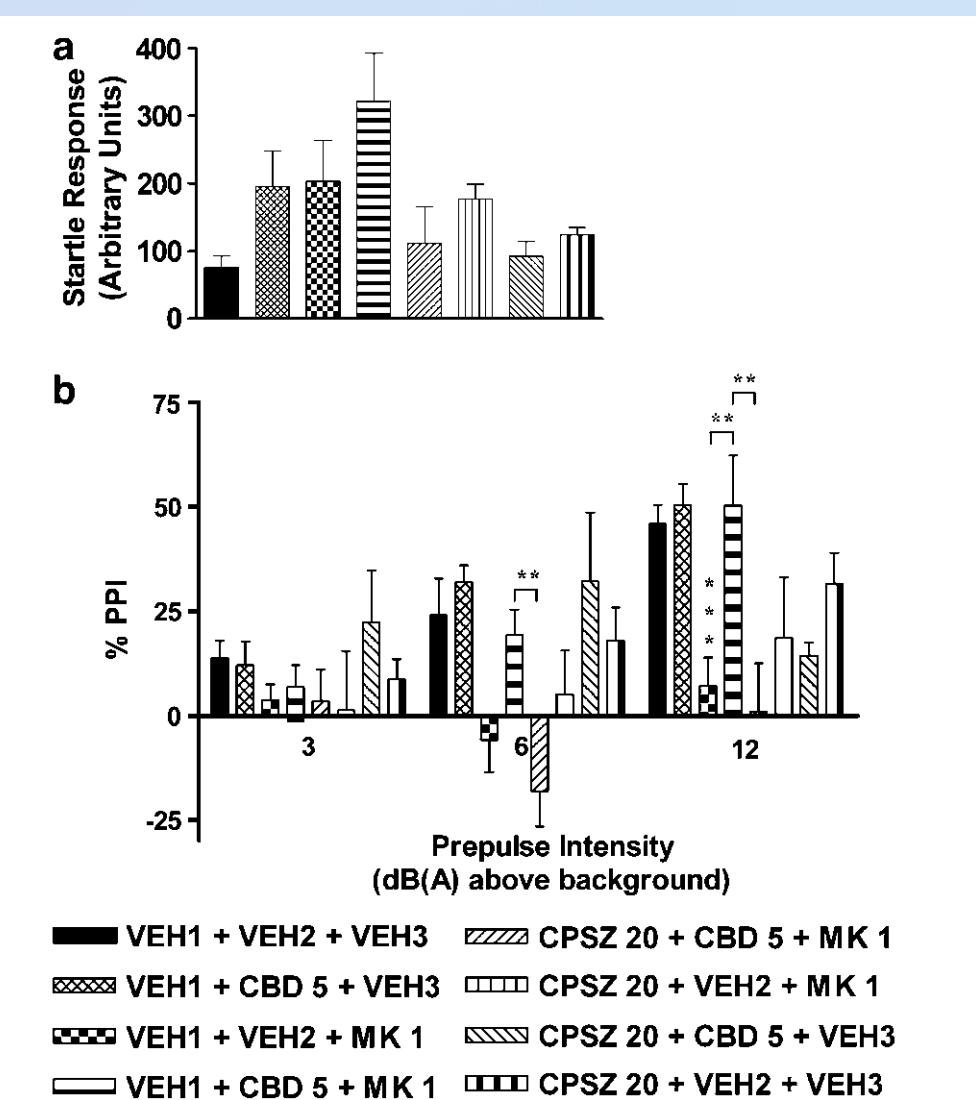


Figure 3 Effect of pretreatment with capsazepine (20 mg/kg) 20 min prior to cannabidiol (5 mg/kg) and 40 min prior to MK-801 (1 mg/kg) on (a) acoustic startle response and (b) prepulse inhibition (PPI) of the startle response in mice. Results are expressed as mean \pm SEM, $n=5-8$. $^{***}P<0.01$ between treatment groups as indicated, $^{***}P<0.001$ vs vehicle treatment group (individual planned comparisons, $\alpha=0.0125$). CPSZ = capsazepine, CBD = cannabidiol, MK = MK-801, VEHI = 1:1:198 Tween[®] 80:EtOH:saline, VEHI2 = 1:1:1:18 Cremophor[®] EL:EtOH:saline, VEHI3 = 0.1% ascorbic acid in distilled water.

Long et al's 2005 study investigated CBD's ability to reverse MK—801 (an NMDA antagonist) induced psychotic symptoms in mice. CBD did reverse the effects of MK—801, but when co-administered with capsazepine, a TRPV1 antagonist, CBD's effects disappeared. This evidence strongly indicates TRPV1's role in CBD treatable psychosis, and potentially its interrelation to several other neural systems (such as the NMDA receptor seen here, or the D2 and C81 neural systems cited in Zuardi 2006 and Campos 2012).

Long, L. E.; Malone, D. T.; Taylor, D. A. (2005). "Cannabidiol Reverses MK-801-Induced Disruption of Prepulse Inhibition in Mice". Neuropsychopharmacology 31 (4): 795-803. doi:10.1038/sj.npp.-1300838. PMID 16052245

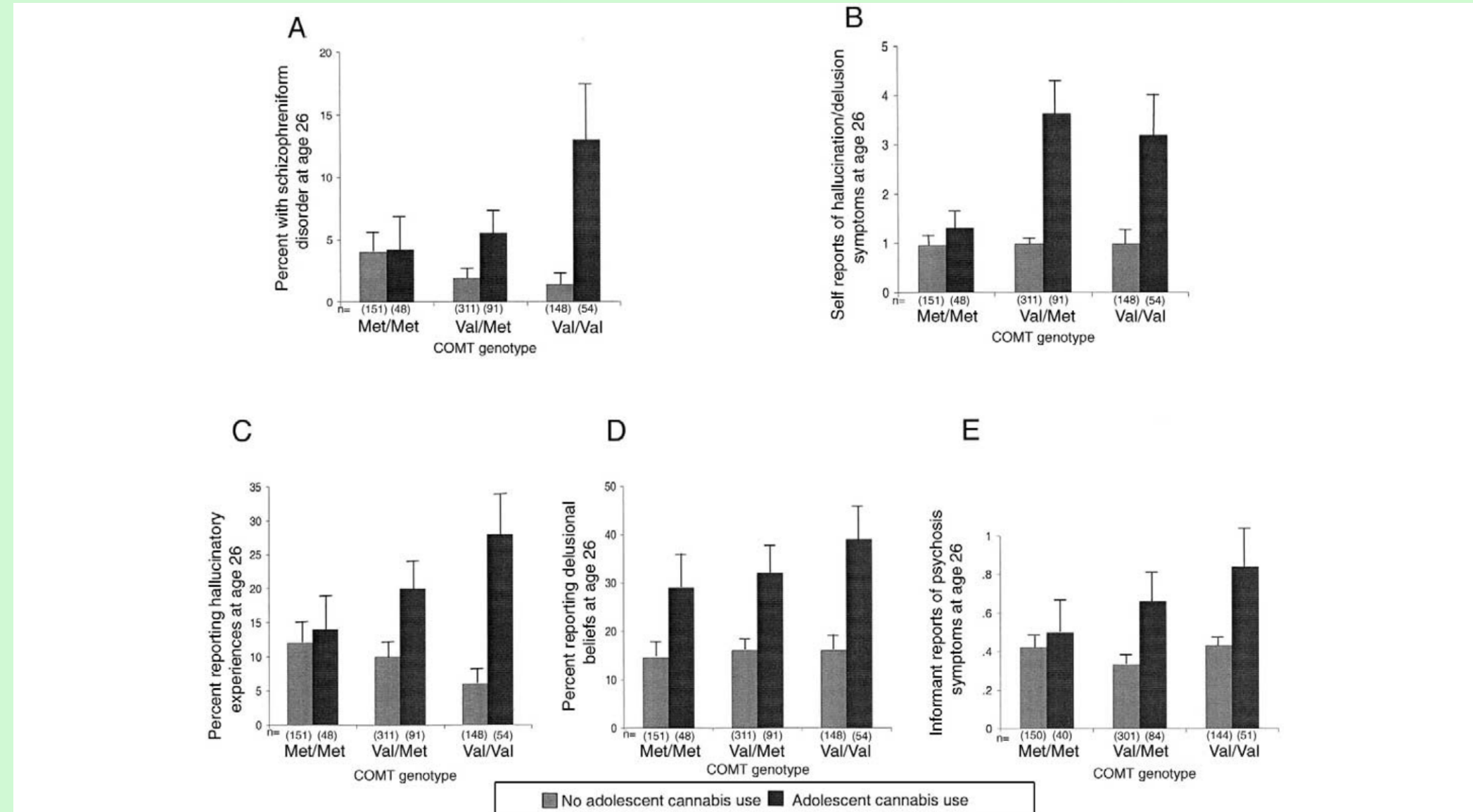


Figure 1. The influence of adolescent-onset cannabis use on adult psychosis is moderated by variations in the COMT gene. (A) The percentage of individuals meeting diagnostic criteria for schizophrenia disorder at age 26. (B) Means (and standard errors) on age-26 self-reports of symptoms of psychosis (hallucinations and delusions). (C) The percentage of individuals reporting at least one delusional belief at age 26. (D) The percentage of individuals reporting at least one delusional belief at age 26. (E) Means (and standard errors) on age-26 informant reports of symptoms of psychosis.

Table 3. Comparisons of the Three (Genotype) by Two (Adolescent-Onset Cannabis Use) Groups on Covariates and Outcomes									
Covariates ^a	Non-Cannabis-Using Adolescents			Early-Onset Adolescent Cannabis Users					
	Met/Met (n = 151)	Val/Met (n = 311)	Val/Val (n = 148)	Met/Met (n = 48)	Val/Met (n = 91)	Val/Val (n = 54)	Met/Met (n = 48)	Val/Met (n = 91)	Val/Val (n = 54)
Adult cannabis use (%) ^b	21.8	25.2	25.7	70.2	69.6	71.7	70.2	69.6	71.7
Adolescent use of drugs other than cannabis (%) ^c	1.3	1.0	2.0	41.7	40.0	42.6	41.7	40.0	42.6
Adult use of amphetamines and hallucinogens (%) ^d	15.2	16.7	16.2	52.1	50.6	50.0	52.1	50.6	50.0
Childhood psychotic symptoms (%) ^e	15.4	10.0	13.6	21.6	18.3	14.3	21.6	18.3	14.3
Childhood IQ (M, SD)	110 (13)	107 (13)	108 (14)	107 (13)	107 (13)	107 (12)	107 (13)	107 (13)	107 (12)
Adolescent conduct disorder (%) ^f	10.5	11.5	16.9	52.1	42.4	46.3	52.1	42.4	46.3
Diagnosis of schizophreniform disorder (%)	4.0	2.3	1.4	4.2	5.5	13.0	4.2	5.5	13.0
Self-reports of psychotic symptoms (M, SD)	96 (2.8)	99 (2.8)	98 (3.1)	1.3 (2.4)	3.6 (6.7)	3.2 (7.1)	1.3 (2.4)	3.6 (6.7)	3.2 (7.1)
Evidence of hallucinatory experiences (%)	12.6	9.7	6.8	14.6	22.0	27.8	14.6	22.0	27.8
Evidence of delusional beliefs (%)	14.6	16.4	15.5	29.2	31.9	38.9	29.2	31.9	38.9
Informant reports of psychotic symptoms (M, SD)	42 (7.1)	33 (5.4)	44 (6.7)	50 (8.7)	66 (1.1)	84 (1.1)	50 (8.7)	66 (1.1)	84 (1.1)

^aThe covariates offer alternative explanations of the obtained G \times E results. There was no significant association between genotype and any of the covariates (all p values exceeded .35). There was a significant association between adolescent-onset cannabis use and adult cannabis use ($p < .001$), use of other drugs in adolescence ($p < .001$), use of amphetamines and hallucinogens in adulthood ($p < .001$), and adolescent conduct disorder ($p < .001$), but not between adolescent-onset cannabis use and childhood psychotic symptoms ($p = .06$) and childhood IQ ($p = .27$). Moreover, the observed G \times E interaction could not be accounted for by the pattern of associations in the six exposure cells; that is, when by adolescent-onset cannabis use, the three genotype groups did not differ from each other on any of the covariates.

^bPercent study members reporting using cannabis, on average, on a monthly basis at age 21 years, 26 years, or both.

^cPercent study members reporting trying other drugs at age 15 years, 18 years, or both.

^dPercent study members reporting using amphetamines, hallucinogens, or both at age 21 years, 26 years, or both.

^ePercent study members reporting "strong" or "weak" psychotic symptoms at age 11 years.

^fPercent study members meeting diagnostic criteria for conduct disorder between ages 11 and 18 years.

Caspi et al's 2005 study correlated an earlier onset of psychosis in cannabis users with a specific polymorphism in the catecholamine o-methyltransferase gene, specifically the Valine-158 allele was the most likely to be correlated with psychotic symptoms. This indicates that those at risk may potentially be informed through genetic testing. The paper goes so far as to state that cannabis users with a homozygous Methionine-158 genotype will have no such adverse effects from cannabis consumption. Alternatively a study conducted by Zammit et al in 2007 concluded that cannabis use had no modulatory effects on psychotic symptoms or on either valine or methionine allele catecholamine o- methyltransferase.

Caspi A, Moffitt TE, Cannon M, McClay, Murray R, Harrington H, Taylor A, Arseneault L, Williams B, Braithwaite A, Poulton R, Craig IW (2005). "Moderation of the Effect of Adolescent-Onset Cannabis Use on Adult Psychosis by a Functional Polymorphism in the Catechol-O-Methyltransferase Gene: Longitudinal Evidence of a Gene X Environment Interaction". Biological Psychiatry 57 (10): 1117-27. doi:10.1016/j.biopsych.2005.01.026.PMID 15866551

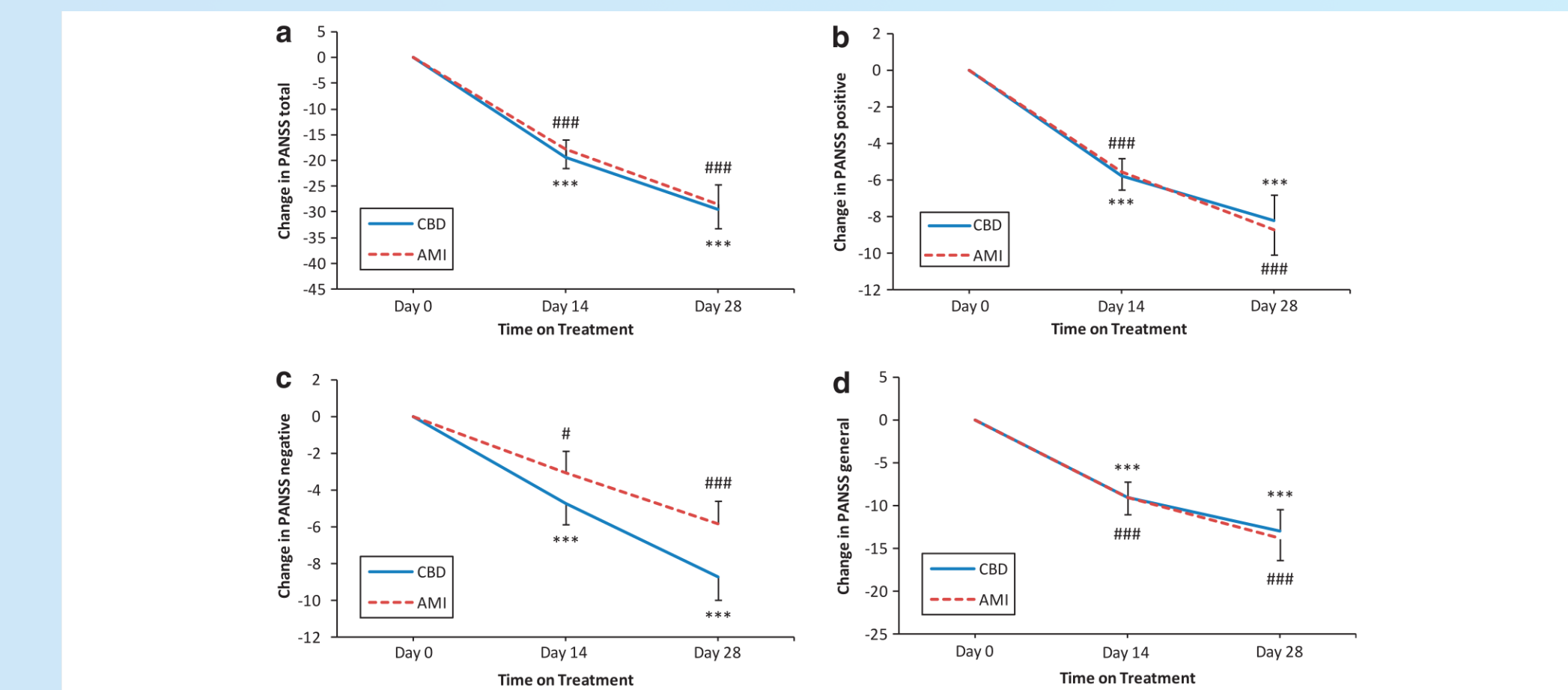


Figure 2 Changes from baseline in Positive and Negative Symptoms Scale (PANSS) scores determined using mixed effects repeated measures model analysis (adjusted for baseline). (a) PANSS total score, (b) PANSS-positive score, (c) PANSS-negative score, (d) PANSS general score. Data show predicted means and s.e. at each week. Statistical significance is calculated between groups ($^{*}P<0.05$, $^{**}P<0.01$ and $^{***}P<0.001$) and vs baseline (that is, 0: $^{*}P<0.05$, $^{**}P<0.01$, $^{***}P<0.001$).

Table 1 Patterns of cannabis use at baseline and psychotic symptoms at follow up. Figures are numbers (percentages) of participants									
Cannabis use at baseline	Any psychotic symptom at follow up		At least two psychotic symptoms at follow up						
	Yes (n=24)	No (n=2013)	Yes (n=74)	No (n=228)	Yes (n=24)	No (n=2013)	Yes (n=74)	No (n=228)	Yes (n=24)
None	82 (19.3)	238 (11.8)	44 (25.3)	276 (12.2)	82 (19.3)	238 (11.8)	44 (25.3)	276 (12.2)	82 (19.3)
Cumulative frequency ^a :									
None	342 (80.7)	1775 (88.2)	130 (74.7)	1987 (87.8)	342 (80.7)	1775 (88.2)	130 (74.7)	1987 (87.8)	342 (80.7)
<1 times/month	13 (3.1)	69 (3.4)	5 (2.9)	77 (3.4)	13 (3.1)	69 (3.4)	5 (2.9)	77 (3.4)	13 (3.1)
3-4 times/month	18 (4.2)	65 (3.1)	10 (5.7)	70 (3.1)	18 (4.2)	65 (3.1)	10 (5.7)	70 (3.1)	18 (4.2)
1-2 times/week	12 (2.8)	40 (2.0)	7 (4.0)	50 (2.2)	12 (2.8)	40 (2.0)	7 (4.0)	50 (2.2)	12 (2.8)
3-4 times/week	12 (2.8)	21 (1.0)	8 (4.6)	25 (1.1)	12 (2.8)	21 (1.0)	8 (4.6)	25 (1.1)	12 (2.8)
Almost daily	22 (5.2)	46 (2.3)	14 (8.0)	34 (1.5)	22 (5.2)	46 (2.3)	14 (8.0)	34 (1.5)	22 (5.2)

Table 4 Interactions between any cannabis use and predisposition for psychosis									
Cannabis use at baseline	No with psychosis outcome		No without psychosis outcome		Risk of psychotic symptoms at follow up		Difference in risk		
	Unadjusted	Adjusted (95% CI)	Unadjusted	Adjusted (95% CI)	Unadjusted	Adjusted (95% CI)	Unadjusted	Adjusted (95% CI)	Unadjusted
No predisposition for psychosis at baseline	15%	6%	5.6%	(5.4 to 10.8)	P=0.033				
Any (5 times)	204	216	21%						
Predisposition for psychosis at baseline	47	133	26%	25%	23.8%	(7.9 to 39.7)	P=0.003		
Any (5 times)	23	22	51%						

^aNumbers total 2438 because of one missing value on predisposition for psychosis at baseline. Age, sex, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, childhood trauma, and predisposition for psychosis at follow up. Test for additive interaction 18.2% adjusted difference in risk (95% confidence interval 1.3 to 34.5), P=0.002 (both whether risk difference in "predisposition" group is significantly greater than risk difference in "no predisposition" group).

What is already known on this topic

It is generally accepted that cannabis use is strongly associated with psychosis

We do not know whether the association is causal or whether those with a predisposition for psychosis are particularly at risk

What this study adds

Cannabis use in young people moderately increased the risk of developing psychotic symptoms

The risk for the onset of symptoms was much higher in young people with a predisposition for psychosis

Predisposition psychosis at baseline did not predict cannabis use at follow up, thus refuting the self-medication hypothesis

The debate over cannabis' causal connection to schizophrenic onset in adolescents has been ongoing in the scientific community for some time, and fortunately has produced a wealth of literature, and more importantly, empirical evidence on the subject. For example, Henquet's 2005 study concludes, "Cannabis use moderately increases the risk of psychotic symptoms in young people but has a much stronger effect in those with evidence of predisposition for psychosis."

Henquet C, Krabbendam L, Spauwen J, Kaplan C, Lieb R, Wittchen HU, van Osj (2005). "Prospective cohort study of cannabis use, predisposition for psychosis, and psychotic symptoms in young people". BMJ 330 (7481): 11-0. doi:-10.1136/bmj.38267.664086.63.PMC 539839. PMID 15574485

Leweke et al's 2012 study performed a clinical trial with schizophrenic patients comparing the efficacy of CBD versus amisulpride. The study cited previous work's by Lewek where the elevated levels of synaptic anandamide (a endocannabinoid ligand for Cbl receptors in the brain) correlated with CBD plasma levels, indicating CBD's ability to inhibit enzymatic degradation of anandamide (through Fatty Acid Amide Hydrolase or FAAH). The study found that CBD was equally effective as amisulpride (a drug that antagonizes D2 and D3 dopamine receptors) at treating psychotic symptoms of schizophrenia, but with a much reduced profile of side-effects. These findings indicate that proper use or drug-assisted optimization of the transmission of endocannabinoids can preclude harsher dopamine antagonist drug therapy.

Leweke, FM; Piomelli D, Pahlisch F, Muhl D, Gerth CW, Hoyer C, Klosterkotter, Hellmich M and Koethe D. (2012). "Cannabidiol enhances anandamide signaling and alleviates psychotic symptoms of schizophrenia". Translational Psychiatry 2 (3): e94-. doi:10.1038/tp.-2012.15. PMC 3316151. PMID 22832859

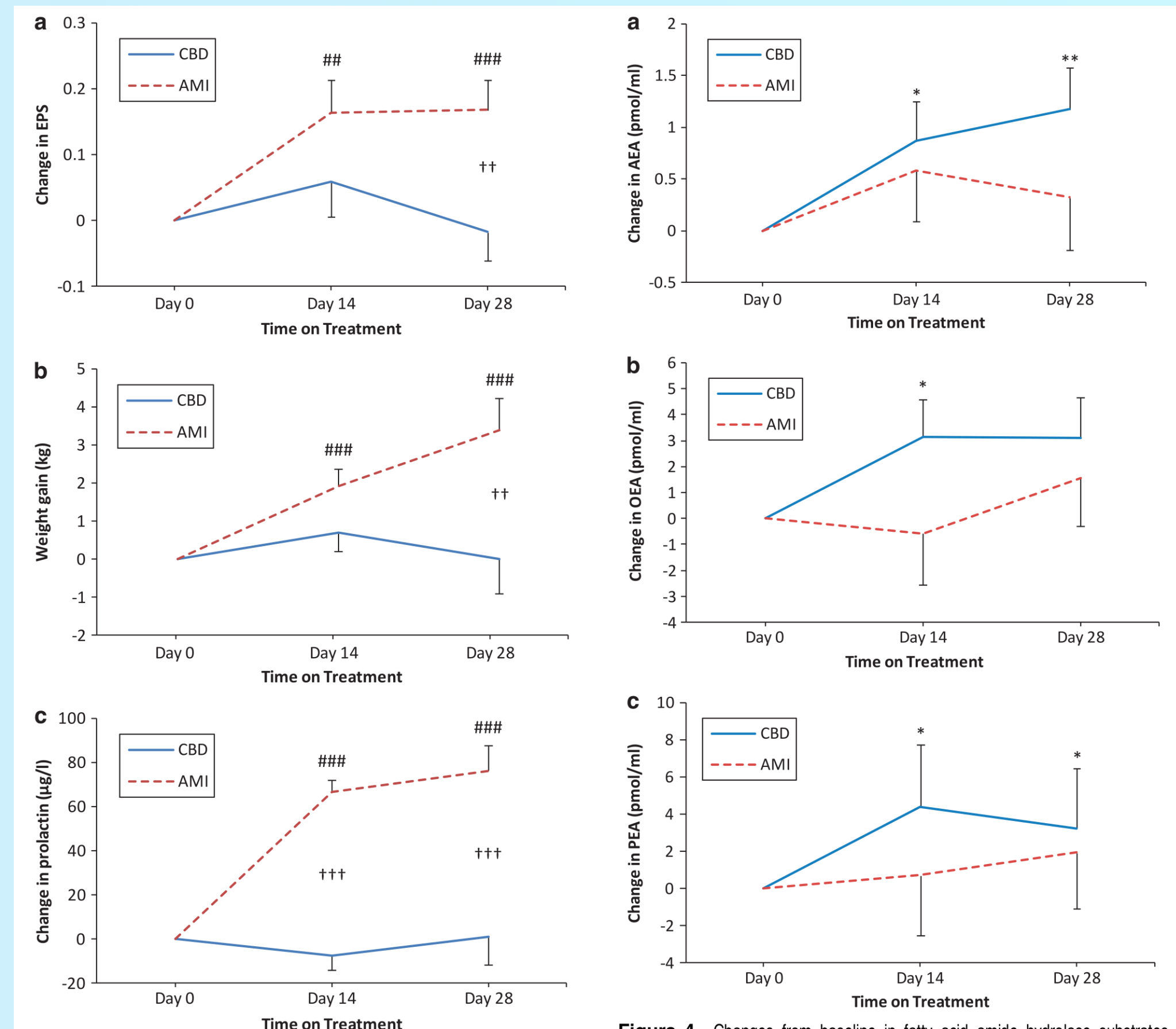


Figure 3 Changes from baseline in fatty acid amide hydrolase substrates determined using mixed effects repeated measures model analysis (adjusted for baseline). (a) Extrapyramidal Symptom Scale (EPS), (b) Weight gain, (c) Prolactin. Data show predicted means and s.e. at each week. Statistical significance is calculated between groups ($^{*}P<0.05$, $^{**}P<0.01$ and $^{***}P<0.001$) and vs baseline (that is, 0: $^{*}P<0.05$, $^{**}P<0.01$, $^{***}P<0.001$).

	Attempt to limit reverse causation	Attempt to limit intoxication effects	Approximate change from crude to adjusted OR (%) ^a
CHES ¹⁰	Adjusted for psychotic symptoms at previous assessment and used SEM to address direction of causation	Used SCL-90-R measure of illness. Did not also identify duration of symptoms caused by drug intoxication	65%
Durheim ¹	Adjusted for psychotic symptoms at age 21 years (controls measured at age 16 and 18/19 years)	Used DQ to measure outcome. Excluded symptoms caused solely by drug use	10%
ECA ⁴	Adjusted with psychotic diagnoses at baseline	Used DFS to measure outcome. Excluded symptoms caused solely by drug use	30%
ESDS ⁸	Adjusted for predisposition to psychosis measured at baseline	Used M-CIDI to measure outcome. Stated that no symptoms were due to acute drug use	15%
NEMESIS ⁵	Adjusted for psychotic symptoms at baseline	Used CIDI to measure outcome. Excluded symptoms caused by drug use	50%
NPIBS ⁶	Excluded people with demedicalized symptoms at baseline	Used PSP to measure outcome. Did not identify duration of symptoms caused by drug intoxication	80%
Swedish conscripts ³	Adjusted with psychotic diagnoses at baseline	Used ICD-diical diagnosis of schizophrenia as outcome, suggesting influence of other factors	60%