

Addict Behav. 2005 Aug;30(7):1382-91.

Cannabis use to enhance sportive and non-sportive performances among French sport students.

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Abstract

PURPOSE:

Despite a large public health interest in substance use among athletes, only a few works have addressed illicit drug use in relation with sport practice. We have studied cannabis use to enhance both sportive and non-sportive performance among French sport university students.

METHODS:

An anonymous self-reported questionnaire was administered to a sample of students from six Sport Science Universities from Southern France. Information on sport practice and cannabis use (frequency, quantity, motives) was collected.

RESULTS:

Males were more prone to have already used cannabis to enhance non-sportive performance as well as sportive performance. The simultaneous equation model indicated that both kinds of enhancing-substance use were endogenous: cannabis use to enhance sportive performance leads to cannabis use to enhance non-sportive performance and reciprocally. Moreover, the relaxing properties of cannabis may be frequently used to enhance performance. Cannabis use to enhance sportive performance was positively related to the competitive level and to sliding sports.

CONCLUSIONS:

The present study helps to improve understanding on an empirical paradox about the relationship between doping agents use and so-called 'recreational' drug use among athletes. Indeed, people who use doping agents may also use 'recreational' drugs for a 'non-recreational' purpose.

PMID:

16022934

[PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]