

Cannabis Vaping: an online survey characterising patterns of use, reasons for use and the effects of vaping

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Introduction

Cannabis vaping is an emerging method of cannabis use within the UK, but it is poorly characterised and understood.

The self reported 'high' and onset of effects from vaped cannabis is comparable to smoked cannabis (e.g. Hazekamp et al, 2013).

We recently reported on the behaviours and experiences of cannabis vapers from online written posts in drug-related public internet forums (Soar et al, 2017).

The current study aimed to extend our previous knowledge of cannabis vaping in a larger cohort of cannabis vapers; to establish patterns of use, reasons for vaping, perceived benefits and effects of vaping relative to smoking cannabis.

Method

An online Qualtrics survey taking 15-20 mins disseminated to target current adult cannabis vapers via relevant online forums, communities and social media

Survey consisted of questions addressing:

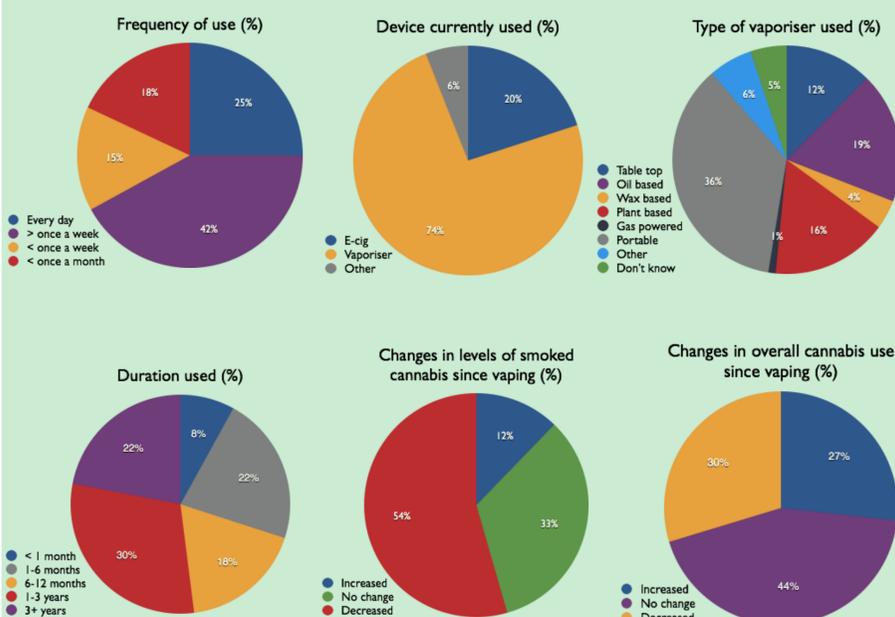
- Demographics information
- Cannabis dependence (CUDIT-R; Adamson et al, 2010)
- Vaping usage characteristics
- Reasons for vaping cannabis
- Beliefs around cannabis vaping
- Effects of vaping cannabis



Participants

89 cannabis vapers; of which 27% (n=24) were exclusive vapers. Average age of 29 years, 72% male, 84% white, 56% single, 48% employed and 26% were students. 33% from the UK, 9% Europe, 48% USA.

Patterns of Use



85% Indicated no change in the strength of cannabis used since vaping

96% Indicated they will continue to vape

Results

Table 1: Reasons endorsed for starting to and continuing to Vape (% reported)

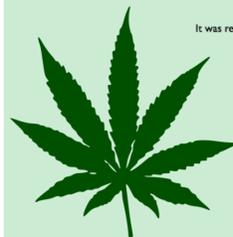
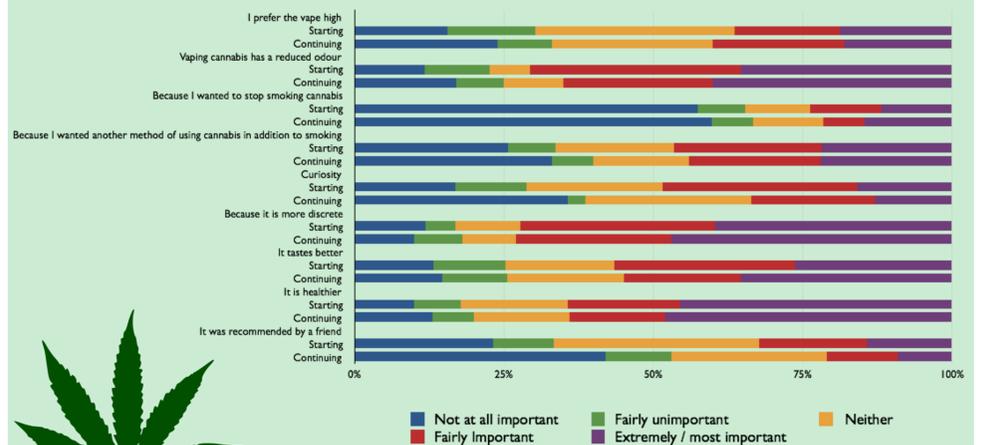


Table 2: Effects of cannabis vaping (% reported)

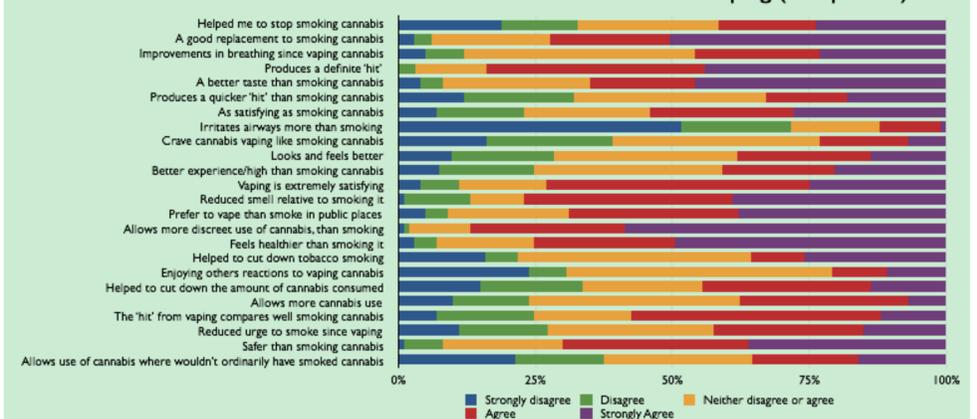
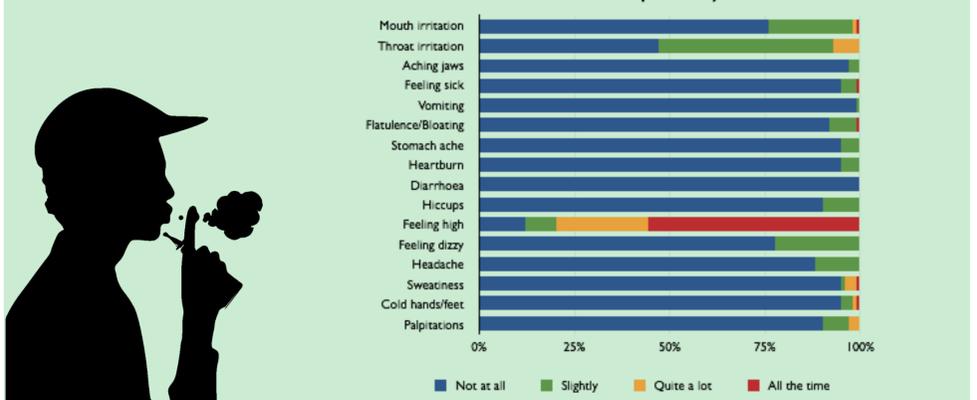


Table 3: Effects of cannabis vaping (% reported)



Conclusions

Cannabis vapers report minimal side effects from vaping, relative to the benefits endorsed for vaping compared to smoking cannabis. These benefits have both contributed and continue to reinforce vaping as an alternative method for consuming cannabis. Whilst the majority don't increase their overall cannabis usage (and with some a reduction is seen), levels of smoking cannabis decreased and a large number intend to continue vaping cannabis, suggesting sustainable changes in their cannabis use.

References

- Hazekamp A, Ruhaak R., Zuurman L, Gerven JV, Verpoorte R (2013) Evaluation of Vaporizing Device (Volcano®) for the Pulmonary Administration of Tetrahydrocannabinol. *Journal of Pharmaceutical Sciences*, 95(6): 1308-1317
- Soar K, Greenhill R, Dawkins L, Turner JJD (2017) Cannabis Vaping: experiences, advantages and practicalities as voiced in internet forums. SSA Annual Conference Nov 2017 <https://www.addiction-ssa.org/symposium/poster/cannabis-vaping-experiences-advantages-and-practicalities-as-voiced-in-inte>