

Cannabis Green-Lights New Drug Profits

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Legal cannabis is becoming a boom industry, throughout the world. If you are interested in profiting, you can find out how to invest in this new sector [here](#) . Our investment is a lot easier, and safer, than trying to secretly grow it in your loft!

We are all familiar with the use of illegal drugs. The right-wing press is very keen to tell us that we'll die an early, miserable death (and go to hell) if we so much as touch them. Unfortunately for foaming-mouth conservatives, the facts do not fit their ideology. Legal drugs, notably alcohol and tobacco, are each responsible for far more deaths than all illegal drugs combined. (Tobacco alone is responsible for 22 times more deaths; World Health Organization.)

Many illegal drugs have big health benefits

There are many specialized medical use cases for currently-illegal drugs. Ecstasy (MDMA) can be used to treat post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), by enabling sufferers to talk about their experiences (it's especially useful for abuse survivors). MDMA is now in Phase-3 trials, meaning medical legalization is imminent. Ketamine is coming to prominence as a treatment for intractable depression. That's very interesting to me, as I'm a periodic sufferer. Although ketamine is not something that's likely to be suitable for me personally, it's great to see new drug treatments for this debilitating condition.

Cannabis has great potential

In just the last few weeks, new research has shown cannabis to be a promising treatment for addiction to crack cocaine (Michael-John Milloy et al; Harm Reduction International Conference – reported in New Scientist). Animal studies suggest that cannabidiol (CBD) is the active ingredient likely responsible for this effect.

However, one of the key problems of prohibition's political and cultural baggage is that it stifles research. It has been very difficult to study the health benefits of drugs, because so much of the ideological focus has been on harm and prohibition. It seems that finding out all the various ways in which drugs are good detracts from the fundamental ideological message that “drugs are bad”. Personally, I find this right-wing nonsense to be amusing self-parody. I even had a “reefer madness” T-shirt, at university – based on a jazz-era poster, warning of the myriad dangers of dope.

Therefore, I read with interest recent news that cannabis has strong beneficial effects on memory. You may be familiar with contrasting stories, suggesting that cannabis causes memory loss (as well as the general collapse of civilised society). The truth, as is common when dealing with mainstream-media lines, is considerably more complicated.

Of course, it's no surprise that cannabis temporarily impairs memory in younger users. Anyone who has used it will likely have noticed this (so a friend told me). But, at present, there's not much evidence for lasting damage.

The flip side of a focus on memory impairment in younger, heavier users is that a bigger story has potentially been overlooked. Recent research now suggests that the tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) in cannabis can actually be used to *preserve* memory in later life (Andras Bilkei-Gorzo et al, Nature Medicine). Older mice given doses of cannabis had significant improvements in cognitive performance – even some time after they stopped taking the drug. However, younger mice experienced the opposite effect – with cannabis causing a reduction in performance (although not necessarily a permanent one).

Accordingly, we might find similar results in humans. This would be a potentially revolutionary finding. Instead of maligning cannabis as a thief of faculties in the young, it might come to be seen as an essential way of preserving memory in the old. Of course, further research is required – to establish how much of this effect crosses into human subjects.

Let's look at the bigger picture, here...

A wide variety of plant-based nutrition is necessary for maintaining good health. I, for example, have a genetic predisposition to age-related macular degeneration. This disease affected my paternal grandfather, leading to a significant loss of visual acuity in later life. I certainly didn't want to end up like him, so I wanted to do everything within my power to avoid this fate. Consequently, I took a DNA test, from 23andMe. It showed that I was vulnerable to age-related macular degeneration. Therefore, it was natural for me to look for protective treatments. Consequently I take Macushield on a regular basis. This tablet, made from marigolds, contains nutrients that are linked to better eye health in later life. I can't guarantee it will help me – but the science suggests it's worth a go. We've [previously covered Huel](#), a replacement food that allows people to get a full range of nutrients –without needing to eat a complex diet. Huel contains many of the nutrients that are included in my eye health supplement – although I don't eat it regularly enough to be able to ditch the pills.

Similarly, Huel is also substituted with lycopene from tomatoes (which is responsible for their bright red colour). Supplementing the diet with lycopene has been shown to reduce cancer risk. So, we can see that a broad range of diseases can potentially be prevented by using plants' newly-discovered tricks. To be clear, these chemicals aren't vitamins – at least not as they're currently defined. However, the health benefits do appear to be evident.

So what's this all got to do with cannabis?

As we've seen from the marigold and tomato examples above, the opportunity exists for creating plant-based food supplements. Accordingly, it's potentially possible that we'll start seeing routine use of cannabis food supplements, to provide memory-protective effects. (Think of them like mini hash cakes, in pill form.)

Beyond the benefits of cannabis, we should expect to discover a whole slew of medically-important new plant nutrients in coming decades. That will likely unlock a large future market in drugs and supplements. Furthermore, it's possible that more of these will come from currently-illegal drugs.

How will this opportunity benefit the UK?

Britain's political landscape is defined by its active grey voters, and febrile right-wing media. This makes the UK a very unfriendly research location, in which to explore the benefits of currently-illegal drugs. Typically, the US is a much friendlier place for investors in cannabis, and similar drugs – although there are many other countries with a thriving legal pot industry.

We are looking forward to seeing you in the next few weeks. Cannabis is strong. For now, criticism of our biotech industry's ability to research cannabis is strong. The esteemed David Nutt has robustly criticised "ridiculous restrictions on cannabis research" - and we hope to be able to get an interview with him, soon.

Please send your stoned ramblings to andrew@southbankresearch.com .

Best,

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