

School: ATEC – Medical Management
Course: Is Cannabis Medicine
Faculty: Ashley Wynn-Grimes, Founder, Cannabis Nursing Solutions

Summary

In the presentation titled "Is Cannabis Medicine?" taught by Ashley Wynn-Grimes of Cannabis Nursing Solutions, several key topics regarding the medical use of cannabis are covered. Wynn-Grimes, who has extensive experience in the cannabis industry, shares insights from her background as a nurse, corporate healthcare project manager, and entrepreneur. Her objective is to educate healthcare providers on the medicinal properties of cannabis and how to appropriately integrate it into patient care.

Wynn-Grimes begins by acknowledging the contentious nature of cannabis use, emphasizing its classification as a Schedule I drug alongside heroin. Despite this, over 30 states have implemented medical cannabis programs, providing patients with greater access. She highlights the responsibility of healthcare providers to understand cannabis and its effects, to better serve their patients.

Central to the discussion are cannabinoids and terpenes, the primary components of cannabis. Cannabinoids, such as THC and CBD, are active compounds that interact with the body's endocannabinoid system. THC is known for its psychoactive effects, while CBD is recognized for its therapeutic benefits without inducing a high. Terpenes, on the other hand, are aromatic compounds that contribute to the plant's scent and have their own therapeutic properties. For instance, pinene, found in pine trees, has a cleansing effect, while limonene, found in citrus fruits, offers a refreshing sensation.

Wynn-Grimes elaborates on the endocannabinoid system, which is the largest neural receptor system in the body, comprising CB1 and CB2 receptors. This system plays a crucial role in how cannabis affects the body, influencing pain relief, seizure management, and nausea reduction. She emphasizes the importance of understanding this system to effectively leverage cannabis as a therapeutic agent.

The presentation also covers essential considerations for healthcare providers. Wynn-Grimes stresses the need for a holistic, non-judgmental approach when assessing patients who consume cannabis. This includes understanding their consumption habits, reasons for use, and sources of their cannabis. She advocates for individualized therapeutic dosing, as cannabis medicine requires careful titration to achieve optimal results.

A case study is presented to illustrate practical applications. The patient, A.G., has a history of hypertension, back pain, and significant stress due to her job and family responsibilities. Through detailed assessment and understanding of her priorities, Wynn-Grimes suggests a comprehensive care plan. This includes educating A.G. on cannabinoids and terpenes, exploring different consumption methods, and considering non-cannabis approaches such as exercise and meditation to balance her endocannabinoid system.

Wynn-Grimes also discusses various methods of cannabis consumption, such as oral ingestion, topical application, and inhalation, each with different onset and duration times. She advises selecting the method that aligns best with the patient's comfort and therapeutic goals.

In conclusion, Wynn-Grimes underscores the importance of meeting patients with an open and inquisitive attitude, given the increasing accessibility of cannabis. She highlights the need for thorough assessment, understanding potential drug interactions, and leveraging clinical judgment to provide the best care possible. The session wraps up with a Q&A segment addressing the interaction of cannabis with prescription drugs, particularly those affecting the liver and specific receptors.

Overall, the presentation provides a comprehensive overview of cannabis as medicine, equipping healthcare providers with the knowledge to better understand and guide their patients in the therapeutic use of cannabis.

Learning Objectives

1. Understand the basic components of cannabis, including cannabinoids and terpenes, and their interactions within the human body.
2. Recognize the endocannabinoid system and its role in the body's response to cannabis.
3. Identify the considerations and ethical responsibilities for healthcare providers when discussing cannabis with patients.
4. Learn to assess patient needs and tailor cannabis-related advice based on individual health profiles and therapeutic goals.
5. Explore different methods of cannabis consumption and their implications for patient care.

Primary Takeaways

1. Cannabis is composed of various cannabinoids and terpenes, each contributing to its overall effects and potential therapeutic benefits.

2. The endocannabinoid system is crucial in mediating the body's response to cannabis, involving CB1 and CB2 receptors throughout the body.
3. Healthcare providers must adopt a non-judgmental, holistic approach when assessing and advising patients on cannabis use.
4. Individualized therapeutic dosing is essential in cannabis medicine, requiring careful consideration of each patient's unique response and needs.
5. There are multiple routes of cannabis administration, and providers should guide patients based on their comfort and the desired therapeutic outcomes.

Course Outline

- 1) Introduction to Cannabis as Medicine
 - a) Background of Cannabis Use
 - i) Schedule I Drug Status
 - ii) State Implementation of Medical Cannabis Programs
 - b) Overview of Components
 - i) Cannabinoids (THC, CBD, etc.)
 - ii) Terpenes and Their Effects
- 2) The Endocannabinoid System
 - a) Structure and Function
 - i) CB1 and CB2 Receptors
 - ii) Interaction with Cannabinoids
 - b) Implications for Health and Disease
 - i) Pain Management
 - ii) Neurological Effects
- 3) Ethical and Clinical Considerations
 - a) Patient Assessment
 - i) Interview Style and Non-Judgmental Approach
 - ii) Evaluating Consumption Patterns
 - b) Holistic Approach to Care
 - i) Physical, Personal, and Spiritual Factors
 - ii) Risk vs. Benefit Analysis
- 4) Practical Application
 - a) Therapeutic Dosing
 - i) Importance of Individualized Dosing
 - ii) Monitoring and Adjusting Dosages
 - b) Methods of Administration

- i) Oral, Topical, Inhalation, etc.
 - ii) Onset and Duration Considerations
- 5) Case Study and Real-World Application
- a) Patient Scenario
 - i) Background and Symptoms
 - ii) Prioritizing Patient Needs
 - b) Developing a Care Plan
 - i) Education on Cannabis Components
 - ii) Strategies for Stress Relief and Symptom Management

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