

ulation, it remains an underresearched area, and little is known about the features of SC use among this group.

Methods: We recruited a purposive sample of 120 prisoners currently incarcerated in an English adult male prison to complete a questionnaire during a 1 to 1 confidential interview. Psychological distress was measured using the Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI-18), and participants were asked questions about their sociodemographic and custodial characteristics and their use of drugs inside and outside of prison. Those that reported using SC inside prison were asked additional questions related to their features of use (including past 4-week frequency and administration method) and reasons for use.

Results: A total of 55 (45%) participants reported ever use of SC in prison, and this group reported significantly higher levels of psychological distress than those never using SC in prison ($t(118) = 3.28, p = .004$, CI: 95% CI: 3.73, 14.25). The majority of SC users ($n=25$) had used SC in the last week and reported vaping infused paper as the most common administration method (72%). The reasons for use most commonly endorsed by participants were to deal with boredom (90%), to make the prison sentence pass faster (88%), to cope with stress (82%) and to help sleep (76%).

Conclusions: The use of SCs is highly prevalent among UK prisoners and its use is associated with higher levels of psychological distress. The majority of SC use occurs via the vaporisation of infused paper, and the health effects of this are entirely unknown. Use appears to be mostly driven by coping motives, such as to help sleep or deal with stress or boredom, and this should be used to inform interventions aiming to reduce SC use within prison populations.

doi: [10.1016/j.etdah.2023.100082](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.etdah.2023.100082)

The Use of Image and Performance Enhancing Drugs During the Covid-19 Lockdown: a Cross-Cultural Study on Potential Users and Associated Risks

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Introduction: Image and performance-enhancing drugs (IPEDs), or lifestyle drugs, are a wide range of products presented as having the potential to improve mental and physical function and health. Little is known about IPEDs consumption during the COVID-19 lockdown. The present study aimed to profile IPEDs during this period characterised by physical distancing, isolation, gym closures, and other altered lifestyle habits.

Methods: A cross-sectional observational study investigating the type of IPEDs consumed and purchasing methods was disseminated via a web-based questionnaire in eight countries (United Kingdom, Italy, Lithuania, Hungary, Portugal, Spain, Brazil, and Japan) between April and May 2020. This included the Exercise Addiction Inventory (EAI), the Appearance Anxiety Inventory (AAI), and the Self-Compassion Scale (SCS).

Results: A total of 736 IPEDs users were included in the survey. The mean age of the sample was 33.05 years ($SD = 10.06$), with females rate of 64.2%. Among IPEDs users, 6.8% were at risk of exercise addiction ($EAI > 24$), 27.6% presented high levels of appearance anxiety and 24.9% revealed low levels of self-compassion and emotional self-regulation. Most participants (55.6%) purchased IPEDs through pharmacies/specialised shops, while 41.3% purchased IPEDs on the Internet. Online shoppers of IPEDs were mainly men who reported higher scores on the Exercise Addiction Inventory. One or more IPEDs classifiable as

“potentially at-risk” were used by 66.3% of the sample. Users of “potentially at-risk IPEDs” were younger and mostly males. They showed higher scores both at Exercise Addiction Inventory and Appearance Anxiety Inventory.

Conclusions: This study profiled users of IPEDs during the peak of lockdown policies due to the COVID-19 breakdown. Both purchasing methods and types of IPEDs consumed were associated with distinct socio-demographic aspects and psychopathological traits. Some relevant cross-cultural differences were highlighted. Longitudinal studies will be needed to determine the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on IPEDs consumption.

doi: [10.1016/j.etdah.2023.100083](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.etdah.2023.100083)

Neurobiological Sequelae of the Passive or Voluntary Administration of the Synthetic Cannabinoid Receptor Agonist JWH-018

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The use of synthetic cannabinoids receptor agonists (SCRAs) is growing among adults and adolescents, posing major medical and psychiatric risks. JWH-018 represents the reference compound of SCRA-containing products. Our studies were performed to evaluate the enduring consequences of repeated JWH-018 exposure by both passive administration (0.25 mg/kg ip qd, 14 days) in adult rats, and by intravenous self-administration (lever pressing, Fixed Ratio 1–3; 7.5 µg/kg/inf) in adolescent mice. Main results, obtained 24 hours and 7 days after drug discontinuation, showed that repeated JWH-018 exposure in adult rats: (i) induced anxious/aversive behaviors; (ii) decreased spontaneous activity and number of dopamine neurons in the VTA; and (iii) decreased dopamine sensitivity in the NAc shell and core, but not in the mPFC, to a first chocolate exposure; conversely, after a second exposure, dialysate dopamine fully increased in the NAc shell and core but not in the mPFC. Moreover, passive JWH-018 induced: (iv) astrogliosis (mPFC, NAc shell/core, VTA), microgliosis (NAc shell/core), and downregulation of CB1 receptors (mPFC, NAc shell/core). Other studies showed that adolescent JWH-018 IVSA induced at adulthood: (i) repetitive/compulsive-like behaviors; (ii) microgliosis (CPu, NAc) and astrocytopathy (CPu), as revealed by a decreased GFAP expression; (iii) increased of the chemokines MPC1 (striatum) and RANTES (cortex), and a decrease of the cytokines IL2 and IL13 (cortex). Taken together, these data suggest that the long-lasting behavioral and neurochemical effects of JWH-018 exposures may not differ substantially as a function of passive or voluntary administration except for some specific aspects of the brain immune response, that deserve further clarification.

doi: [10.1016/j.etdah.2023.100084](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.etdah.2023.100084)

Recreational Use of Nitrous Oxide – a Growing Concern in Europe

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Introduction: Nitrous oxide, commonly known as laughing gas, is used medically as an analgesic and anaesthetic. It has been used recreationally for its brief euphoric effects for over 200 years, however, in the last decade, there has been a large increase in its recreational use and, more recently, an increase in reported serious health and social harms in some countries. The situation in seven European countries has been analyzed, including epidemiology, health and social harms, policy responses, and