

# Internet Program for the Reduction of Cannabis Use

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<b>Registration date</b> 23/04/2013	<b>Overall study status</b> Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results
<b>Last Edited</b> 16/10/2015	<b>Condition category</b> Mental and Behavioural Disorders	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data

## Plain English summary of protocol

### Background and study aims

Cannabis is the most widely used illegal drug in Switzerland, other Western European countries, Australia and the USA. Most users consume cannabis for recreational purposes, only from time to time or on special occasions. However, some users smoke cannabis more frequently and in higher quantities. These users risk adverse physical and mental health effects. Moreover, there is a certain risk of addiction that can have various psycho-social consequences (like e.g. problems with partner, parents, at work etc.)

in Switzerland and its neighboring countries, treatment for cannabis use disorders like cannabis dependence is mainly provided by outpatient addiction treatment services. For many users these services are difficult to access. Some users also hesitate to get into face-to-face contact as they worry that this could have negative consequences such as stigmatization. In order to improve anonymous treatment and to provide free access to treatment access we have developed the Cannabis Control program.

### Who can participate?

Cannabis users aged 18 and above, either sex, and who have smoked cannabis at least once per week in the past 30 days prior to enrolment in the study.

### What does the study involve?

Participants will be randomly allocated to one of three groups:

Group 1: Participants will have three individual chat-counseling sessions based on motivational interviewing and cognitive-behavioral therapy approaches in combination with the web-based self-help intervention from Group 2.

Group 2: The web-based self-help intervention is based on classical cognitive behavioral therapy approaches for cannabis addiction, motivational interviewing approaches, and principles of self control.

Group 3: Classical waiting list.

For Group 1 and Group 2, there will be weekly reminder emails to login and fill out a consumption diary. Counseling sessions in Group 1 are provided by trained addiction counselors. Moreover, 8 specific modules to work through in a fixed order but time independent manner will

be offered to Group 1 and Group 2. Participants allocated to Group 3 will have the opportunity to participate in the web-based self-help intervention after the follow-up assessment. Follow-up measures will be assessed online and/or by telephone calls three months after enrolment.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

Within the 6 week web-based Cannabis Control program, participants can learn to reduce and control their cannabis use.

Cannabis abstinence or possibly also strong reduction of the frequency and quantity of cannabis may cause withdrawal symptoms or adverse events. In case of serious withdrawal symptoms or adverse events, additional telephone contacts to professionals are provided. Additional costs resulting from these personal contacts are to be covered by the general health insurance that is compulsory for everybody in Switzerland.

Where is the study run from?

The Cannabis Control study has been set up by the Swiss Research Institute for Public Health and Addiction, a World Health Organization Collaborating Center for Substance Abuse, associated institute to Zurich University, Switzerland. The study will be conducted in close collaboration with ARUD, the leading outpatient addiction counseling organization in the Canton of Zurich, Switzerland.

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

Recruitment is expected to start mid-2013. Participants will be enrolled for a period of two years.

Who is funding the study?

The Swiss Office for the Coordination of Addiction Facilities infodrog (Switzerland).

Who is the main contact?

Dr Michael Schaub

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## Contact information

### Type(s)

Scientific

### Contact name

Dr Michael Schaub

### Contact details

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## Additional identifiers

Protocol serial number

N/A

## Study information

### Scientific Title

Chat-Counseling and Web-Based Self-Help versus Web-Based Self-Help Intervention versus Waiting List to Control Cannabis Use in Problematic Cannabis Users: A Randomized Controlled Trial

### Acronym

Cannabis Control

### Study objectives

It is hypothesized, that web-based interventions which are more interactive are more effective in reducing cannabis use in problematic cannabis users. Therefore we will test the following detailed study hypotheses:

1. Chat-based counseling in combination with web-based self-help for the reduction of cannabis use is more effective than the waiting list control condition.
2. Web-based self-help for the reduction of cannabis use is more effective than the waiting list control condition.
3. Chat-based counseling in addition to web-based self-help for the reduction of cannabis use is more effective than web-based self-help alone.

### Ethics approval required

Old ethics approval format

### Ethics approval(s)

Ethics Committee of the Canton of Zurich, Switzerland, 11th April 2013, ref: KEK-StV-Nr. 15/13.

### Study design

Three arm randomized controlled web-based trial

### Primary study design

Interventional

### Study type(s)

Treatment

### Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Cannabis misuse and cannabis abuse

### Interventions

This is a three arm randomized controlled trial. The intervention in the first arm consists of three individual chat-counseling sessions based on motivational interviewing and cognitive-behavioral therapy approaches in combination with the web-based self-help intervention from study arm two. The web-based self-help intervention from study arm two is based on classical cognitive behavioral therapy approaches for cannabis addiction, motivational interviewing approaches, and principles of self control. The third study arm consists of a classical waiting list.

Study arms 1-2 involve weekly reminder e-Mails to login and fill out a consumption diary. Counseling sessions in study arm one are provided by trained addiction counselors. Moreover, 8 specific modules to work through in a fixed order but time independent manner will be offered in study arms 1-2. Participants randomized to the waiting list will have the opportunity to participate in the web-based self-help intervention after the follow-up assessment. Follow-up measures will be assessed online and/or by telephone calls 3 months past registration.

### **Intervention Type**

Other

### **Phase**

Not Applicable

### **Primary outcome(s)**

The primary outcome is the quantity of weekly cannabis use (measured in number of predefined average standard joints per week according to a consumption diary).

### **Key secondary outcome(s)**

1. Number of cannabis use days per week
2. Severity of cannabis use (CUDIT)
3. Severity of cannabis dependence (SDS)
4. Cannabis withdrawal symptoms (CWS)
5. Cannabis craving symptoms (CCS-7)
6. Other psychoactive substance use
7. Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI-18)
8. Health status (EQ-5D-L)
9. Treatment retention
10. Treatment satisfaction

### **Completion date**

31/08/2015

## **Eligibility**

### **Key inclusion criteria**

1. Minimal age 18, either sex
2. At least once a week cannabis use in the past 30 days prior to study entry

### **Participant type(s)**

Patient

### **Healthy volunteers allowed**

No

### **Age group**

Adult

### **Lower age limit**

18 years

**Sex**

All

**Key exclusion criteria**

1. Current serious psychiatric illness or history of psychosis, schizophrenia, bipolar type I disorder or significant current suicidal or homicidal thoughts
2. No other pharmacological or psycho-social treatment for cannabis use disorders at study entry
3. Inability to read or write in German
4. For women: pregnancy or breastfeeding

**Date of first enrolment**

31/08/2013

**Date of final enrolment**

31/08/2015

**Locations****Countries of recruitment**

Switzerland

**Study participating centre**

Swiss Research Institute for Public Health and Addiction (ISGF)

Zurich

Switzerland

8031

**Sponsor information****Organisation**

Swiss Office for the Coordination of Addiction Facilities - infodrog (Switzerland)

**ROR**

<https://ror.org/01qtc5416>

**Funder(s)****Funder type**

Government

**Funder Name**

Swiss Office for the Coordination of Addiction Facilities - infodrog (Switzerland)

# Results and Publications

## Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

### IPD sharing plan summary

Not provided at time of registration

### Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
<a href="#">Results article</a>	results	13/10/2015		Yes	No
<a href="#">Protocol article</a>	protocol	14/11/2013		Yes	No