

CENTRE FOR CLINICAL RESEARCH IN NEUROPSYCHIATRY



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THE EFFECTS OF CANNABIS USE ON EYE BLINKS AND BRAIN FUNCTION

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

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The “startle reflex” is a blink of the eyes when a sudden loud sound occurs, and this reflex is controlled partly by brain areas that are affected by schizophrenia and also by a number of drugs, including cannabis. It is possible that these brain areas also influence attention and other cognitions (thinking). This experiment is investigating how cannabis use may affect eye blinks, attention and cognition, in people who use or don’t use cannabis, and in people who suffer from schizophrenia. This research will tell us more about relationships among marijuana use, schizophrenia and brain function.

WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE STUDY (APPROXIMATELY 3 HOURS)

- **Substance Use Questionnaire:** about your use of substances such as nicotine, alcohol, caffeine, cannabis and amphetamines
- **Urine Sample:** to assess the levels of these substances in your body. We are only interested in the levels of these substances as they affect the eye blink. The information obtained from this sample will not be stored in association with your name or other identifying data.
- **2 eye blink tasks:** I will attach two small metal sensors to the skin under your eye and one sensor on the back of your hand, these are to record your eye blinks. During both tasks you will then listen to sounds played through headphones, some of these sounds may make you blink. During one of the tasks we will also ask you to look at some pictures on a computer screen and complete a simple counting task. We are interested in the size of your eye blinks to the different types of sounds.
- **Neuropsychological tests:** You will then complete 4 short neuropsychological tests. In the first task you will be asked to name the ink colour in which different words are printed. In the second task you will be asked to sort cards containing different shapes, according to different rules. In the third task you will be asked to remember lists of numbers that are read to you. And in the last task you will be asked to remember the order in which I point to blocks positioned on a board. These tasks look at your attention, memory and executive functioning.
- **Research interview:** about your general and mental health and substance use. The interview will be videotaped so that the other researchers involved in this study can confirm the ratings made by the interviewer

CONFIDENTIALITY



- All information collected will be **coded**, such that your name is not associated with the information, and all information will be treated as **strictly confidential**. Results personal to you will not be given to any person other than the researchers involved in this study, unless required by law.
- The data gathered for this study will be securely stored at Graylands Hospital for at least 7 years following the completion of this study, and then destroyed. The data gathered for this study may also be published, however there will be no name or other identifying information used.

Please note that you are free to withdraw at any time without reason and without prejudice. Your treatment will not be affected in any way if you wish to withdraw.

