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Responsibility messages in alcohol advertising - just one more selling tool?

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Responsibility messages in alcohol advertising - just one more selling tool?

Abstract
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Introduction and Aims: Globally, cannabis is the most widely produced and consumed illicit substance. A significant proportion of dependent cannabis users experience withdrawal symptoms upon cessation of use, which may impact efforts to achieve and maintain abstinence. The primary objective was to examine the safety and efficacy of lithium in the inpatient management of cannabis withdrawal. Primary outcomes were: (i) withdrawal severity (Cannabis Withdrawal Scale); (ii) detoxification completion; and (iii) adverse events. Three-month post-withdrawal outcomes (i.e., alcohol and other drugs use, psychosocial outcomes) and the potential role of oxytocin in mediating effects of cannabis withdrawal were also examined.

Design and Methods: Cannabis dependent adults (n = 38) admitted to an inpatient withdrawal unit for seven days were randomised to receive either lithium (500 mg BD) or placebo, and followed up at 14, 30 and 90-days post discharge.

Results: Lithium did not significantly reduce total CWS scores (F(1,47.85) = 1.11, P = 0.74) compared to placebo, although it significantly reduced ‘loss of appetite’ (F(7,199.48) = 4.05, P = 0.001), ‘stomach aches’ (F(7,199.48) = 2.09, P = 0.05), and ‘nightmares/strange dreams’ (F(7,199.48) = 8.73, P = 0.005). No significant difference was found in the retention of the two groups (Mantel-Cox $\chi^2$ = 1.01, P = 0.75). There was no significant difference in the number (t$_{14}$ = 1.01, P = 0.30) or severity of adverse effects between the groups (t$_{14}$ = 0.00, P = 0.99). No Serious Adverse Events were reported.

Discussion and Conclusions: The efficacy of lithium for the management of cannabis withdrawal is not supported by the findings. The implications for the treatment of cannabis withdrawal, and for the direction and conduct of future research will be discussed.
using positively-valanced words and/or playing on the theme and imagery in the advertisement. Fifty-five percent included the word ‘enjoy’ in the responsibility message and 24% linked the wording of the responsibility message to the theme of the advertisement. In all cases the responsibility message was in substantially smaller font than other writing in the advertisement, and placed at the bottom and/or margin.

Discussion and Conclusions: It appears that responsibility messages in alcohol advertisements are designed not to be noticed by consumers and, if they are noticed, to further promote and encourage consumption by reiterating the key advertising messages.

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**Abstract**

**Results:** Alcohol advertisements for the period 2010–12 (102 of 108 issues of Health and Nutrition) were predominantly for beer (76.7%); and in these magazines, with 17 (36.1%) including a claim about low alcohol content. Given the high Internet usage of young people, there is growing concern about promotion of alcohol to children and adolescents. The widespread presence of 'unofficial' pages is potentially even more problematic; with six of 12 having 50 or more.

Discussion and Conclusions: Given the high volume of alcohol advertising, limiting exposure through gateway mechanisms (such as age verification tools) is important, although largely ineffective. Thus, complementary policies are required, including encouraging Facebook and alcohol brands to work together to remove 'unofficial' pages that use brand's names and trademarks.

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**Introduction and Aims:** Research into the extent and nature of alcohol advertising in Australian magazines has predominantly focused on 'lifestyle/entertainment' magazines. 'Health' magazines are often perceived as an appropriate source of information on health and nutrition. It is reasonable to expect that advertisements in these magazines would predominantly be for health-promoting (or at least not health-damaging) products.

**Discussion and Conclusions:** Consumers are presented with a wide range of conflicting messages about alcohol, the majority of which encourage consumption. We find alcohol advertisements are present in 'health' magazines in similar frequencies to other magazine genres, but are often positioned in such a way as to suggest a health benefit or minimise the perception of a health risk.

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**Design and Methods:** We audited three 'health' magazines (Men's Health, Women's Health and Prevention) for the presence and nature of alcohol advertisements for the period 2010–12 (102 of 108 issues published).

**Results:** Over the three years there were 30 alcohol advertisements in Men's Health, seven in Women's Health and 10 in Prevention. There was considerable variation across years, with over half of the advertisements in Men's Health appearing in 2010 and the number in Prevention increasing over time. Advertisements in Men's Health were predominantly for beer (76.7%); and in Women's Health and Prevention for wine/champagne. What was particularly concerning was the frequent presence of a 'health' message in advertisements appearing in these magazines, with 17 (36.1%) including a claim about low calorie or low carbohydrate content, but only two promoting low(er) alcohol content.

**Discussion and Conclusions:** Key findings included: alcohol brands had an average of 75 000 fans across the 11 Australian-based pages. The two-way nature of communication was evident with posts by fans exceeding posts by brands by more than 28 to 1 (4796 compared to 170). All pages appeared to breach one or more clauses of the Alcohol Beverages Advertising Code, most commonly: (a) mature, balanced and responsible approach to consumption of alcohol; (b) appeal to children or adolescents; and (c) suggest consumption or presence of alcohol beverages as a cause of or contributing to a significant change in mood or environment. The widespread presence of 'unofficial' pages is potentially even more problematic; with six of 12 having 50 or more.

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**Introduction and Aims:** Pro-tobacco messages in media play an important role in initiating smoking behaviour among youth, but can be addressed in health promotion media literacy interventions. This study uses mixed methods to assess a tobacco prevention media literacy intervention.

**Results:** General media literacy and some tobacco-specific media literacy measures improved significantly for treatment compared to control ($P < 0.05$); results for other tobacco-specific media literacy measures and for tobacco attitudes were not significant. Future expectations of smoking increased significantly for treatment participants ages 10 and younger ($P < 0.05$). Several themes emerged from the qualitative data, including: (i) understanding persuasion strategies used in advertising; (ii) desirability of commercials despite the intervention; (iii) pre-existing negative attitudes toward smoking; and (iv) distrust of industry intent.

**Discussion and Conclusions:** Both quantitative and qualitative data indicated differences by age. Improvements in media literacy may be accompanied by an increase in future expectations to smoke, especially for younger children. Pre-existing negative views of smoking may create ceiling effects among young adolescents.

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**Introduction and Aims:** The Internet is increasingly being utilised as a medium for alcohol advertising, although the nature of online media makes it difficult to determine the volume of alcohol marketing. Given the high Internet usage of young people, there is growing concern about promotion of alcohol to children and adolescents.

**Discussion and Conclusions:** It appears that responsibility messages in alcohol advertisements are designed not to be noticed by consumers and, if they are noticed, to further promote and encourage consumption by reiterating the key advertising messages.