Headache Medicine

Phytocannabinoids in Migraine: integrative review

Gabriela Ilias Bechara; Sandro Blasi Esposito

PUC-SP, Sorocaba, São Paulo, Brazil.

Introduction

In recent years, several studies have shown a relationship between the endocannabinoid system and pain processing. This has prompted discussions about the exogenous use of phytocannabinoids for controlling epileptic seizures, neuropathic pain, and more recently, their analysis for treating primary migraine headaches.

Objective

This review aims to revisit existing literature studies that have employed phytocannabinoids in migraine treatment and analyze their outcomes, assessing the applicability of phytocannabinoids in managing migraines.

Method

Based on a literature search across databases from the past twenty years, using descriptors such as "endocannabinoids and migraines," "phytocannabinoids and migraines," "juvenile migraine and cannabidiol," and "('Migraine Disorders"[Mesh]) AND "Cannabinoids"[Mesh]," we identified 304 articles, of which only 24 fulfilled the inclusion criteria.

Results

The selection yielded 24 articles, including: 4 clinical studies, 12 literature reviews, and 8 analyses in animal models, most of which revealed favorable results for the therapeutic use of the drug.

Conclusion

While this is a highly relevant topic, the literature lacks an adequate number of studies for the clinical evaluation of the use of medicinal cannabis in migraines. Findings from animal models and review data demonstrate favorable evidence for usage. However, speculating about the dosage, safety, or clinical effectiveness of its use is not feasible based solely on these. Further randomized clinical research involving humans is necessary.

Keywords: Migraine; Phytocannabinoids; Children.