CANNABINOIDS AND THE DENTAL PATIENT: WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CANNABINOIDS THAT I DIDN’T (FORMALLY) LEARN ABOUT IN SCHOOL?

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Have you ever had to face the prospect of treating a medically-complex patient? Have you ever had a patient needing treatment for a dental emergency who has more than one underlying chronic disease? What about your patients of record who are on more than five medications? Now what if these same patients are also experimenting with cannabinoids? How does the use of marijuana change your treatment plan? Drug abuse remains a major problem in our society. Marijuana is the most commonly used federally illegal drug in the United States with 48.2 million people, or about 18% of Americans, having used it at least once in 2019. Recent research estimated that approximately 3 in 10 people who use marijuana have marijuana use disorder. For people who begin using marijuana before age 18, the risk of developing marijuana use disorder is even greater. Providing dental care to anxious, fearful and medically-complex patients continues to be a major challenge facing dentists. Now more than ever, dental professionals are faced with the additional challenge of treating these patients’ oral health needs in the face of recently deregulated cannabinoids and potential illicit drug use such that the simple approach to, ‘drilling and filling’ has just been cranked up a few more notches. If substance abuse and dependence affects one in ten North Americans, this means one in ten of your patients. This interactive program looks at some of these most challenging patients, their most common negative sequelae due to cannabinoid use and the management of these patients with a particular focus on the dental realm. Case studies will augment the delivery of key points and a problem-based learning approach is encouraged so that each participant’s questions are addressed. Most importantly, you will learn directly applicable strategies to successfully treat these medically-complex patients on Monday morning. After all, our goal is to make sure all dental appointments are not just successful for your patient, but also for you and your staff.

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

• Identify the four main challenges of medically complex dental patients.
• Explain the concept of risk and how to select and de-select appropriate patients
• Describe the risk factors to consider when treating patients who use cannabinoids
• Recognize some of the oral signs of cannabinoid use and how to better manage these patients
• Learn how to help make all of your appointments successful for you, your Team and your patients

MARK DONALDSON, BSP, RPH, PHARMD, FASHP, FACHE received his baccalaureate degree from the University of British Columbia and his Doctorate in Clinical Pharmacy from the University of Washington. He completed a residency at Vancouver General Hospital, and has practiced as a clinical pharmacy specialist, clinical coordinator and director of pharmacy services at many healthcare organizations in both Canada and the United States. He is currently Associate Principal of Clinical Pharmacy for Vizient’s Advisory Solutions, and lives in Whitefish, Montana.

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