

Antidote to synthetic cannabis 'Spice' intoxication could be found in slimming drug

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Early research from Queen Mary University of London has potentially found an antidote that can rapidly stop the intoxicating effects of cannabis and synthetic cannabinoids.

Synthetic cannabinoids, such as 'Spice' and 'Black Mamba', are becoming an increasing problem, especially with youths game to experiment and within the homeless and prison populations, due to their cheapness and odourless properties. Their super strength compared to cannabis is leading to an increasing number of severe adverse reactions and an increasing number of deaths.

The study, published in the *British Journal of Pharmacology*, looked at mice that were experiencing the effects of synthetic cannabinoid intoxication, to see the effects of treating them with a molecule known as AM251.

AM251 blocked the action of the synthetic cannabinoid on one of the [brain receptors](#) and led to a loss of the cannabinoid-related behavioural effects within a few minutes. This included a significant loss of sedation within 20 minutes, and a loss of the associated hypothermia within 40 minutes.

The researchers say that the most rapid way to develop an antidote would be to re-develop one of the slimming drugs, known as rimonabant, which also blocks the [cannabinoid](#) system on which marijuana acts.

More information: Gareth Pryce et al, Antidote to cannabinoid intoxication: the CB1 receptor inverse agonist, AM251, reverses hypothermic effects of the CB1 receptor agonist, CB-13, in mice, *British Journal of Pharmacology* (2017). [DOI: 10.1111/bph.13973](https://doi.org/10.1111/bph.13973)

Provided by Queen Mary, University of London

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