

# Daily users account for over 80% of all cannabis consumed in Australia

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A new study published in the scientific journal *Addiction* estimates that in Australia between 2007 and 2016, 81% to 85% of all cannabis was consumed by the 16% of all Australian cannabis users who used daily. Weekly users and daily users together accounted for an estimated 98% of all cannabis consumed in Australia between 2007 and 2016.

This argues against the common assumption that the pattern of consumption observed with alcohol in high-income countries (in which a minority of heavy drinkers account for most of the drinking) does not apply to [cannabis](#), which has a lower dependence risk than alcohol and many intermittent users.

Other interesting findings from this study:

- Prevalence of past cannabis use in Australia increased from 8.9% in 2007 to 10.5% in 2016.
- Among all past year cannabis users in Australia, 1 in 6 was a daily user.

Lead author Dr. Gary Chan, of the University of Queensland, comments: "Our study shows that the population distribution of cannabis consumption is likely to be much like alcohol, in that daily users account for the majority of total consumption. This suggests that jurisdictions with legalized cannabis should discourage heavy cannabis use by taxing cannabis products, strengthening [social norms](#) that discourage heavy consumption, restricting marketing practices that target heavy users, and screening and intervening with the heaviest cannabis users in [primary care](#) medical settings."

The study applied Monte Carlo simulation methods to four large nationally representative surveys of substance use in Australia to estimate the proportion of total cannabis consumed by daily cannabis users. One thousand simulations were generated.

**More information:** Chan GCK and Hall W (2020) Estimation of the proportion of population cannabis consumption in Australia that is accounted for by daily users using Monte Carlo Simulation. *Addiction* 115: [onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/add.14909](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/add.14909)

Provided by Society for the Study of Addiction

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