



# Factors associated with variability and stability of cannabis use in young adulthood

Medicine

National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre

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# Background

- The literature on cannabis use is dominated by research that has focused on early-life and adolescent risk factors
- Few longitudinal studies have investigated factors in young adulthood which are associated with patterns of cannabis use after the peak period of experimentation
- Prevention programs are increasingly taking a developmental pathways approach

## Aim

- To identify and compare the most important factors in young adulthood associated with initiating cannabis use, reverting to cannabis use and remaining a cannabis user

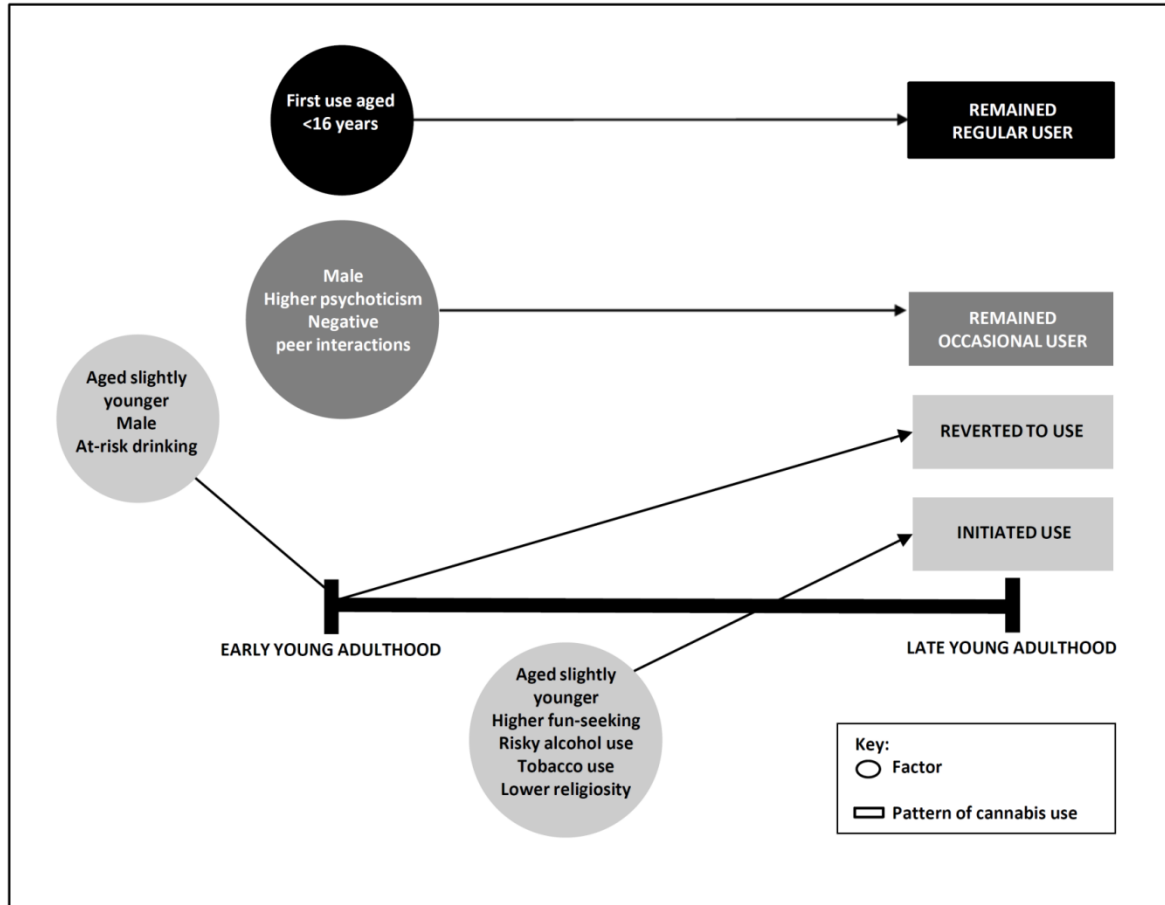


# Method

- Data from two successive waves of the Path Through Life Study (PATH) were analysed (n=2,009)
- Individuals were classified into 4 groups based on their cannabis use between their early and late twenties:
  1. Initiated use during young adulthood
  2. Reverted to use during young adulthood
  3. Remained an occasional user during young adulthood
  4. Remained a regular user during young adulthood
- 14 theoretically important factors associated with cannabis use were assessed



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# Conclusion

1. The assessment of alcohol and tobacco use, interactions with peers, dimensions of personality and gender are important in identifying young adults at increased risk of initiating cannabis use, reverting to use and persisting with use
2. More factors were associated with initiation than with other patterns of cannabis use which suggest that early intervention is likely to provide the greatest opportunity to prevent ongoing problematic cannabis use in young adulthood
3. Findings support broad-based cannabis interventions for young adults that include multi-substance and personality targeted strategies, conflict resolution skills and the promotion of health enhancing values

