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Association between interleukin-6 and neurocognitive performance as a function of self-reported lifetime marijuana use in a community based sample of African American adults.

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Abstract

The purpose of the current study was to determine if self-reported lifetime marijuana use moderates the relationship between interleukin-6 (IL-6) and neurocognitive performance. Participants included 161 African American adults (50.3% women), with a mean age of 45.24 (SD=11.34). Serum was drawn upon entry into the study and participants completed a demographic questionnaire, which included drug use history, and a battery of neuropsychological tests. Using multiple regression analyses and adjusting for demographic covariates, the interaction term comprised of IL-6 and self-reported lifetime marijuana use was significantly associated with poorer performance on the Written ($\beta=-.116$; SE=.059; $p=.049$) and Oral trials ($\beta=-.143$; SE=.062; $p=.022$) of the Symbol Digit Modalities Test, as well as the Trail Making Test trial A ($\beta=.157$; SE=.071; $p=.028$). Current findings support previous literature, which presents the inverse relationship between IL-6 and neurocognitive dysfunction. The potential protective properties of marijuana use in African Americans, who are at increased risk for inflammatory diseases, are discussed.

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