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## Attitudes towards cannabis use and genetic testing for schizophrenia.

[Schiffman J](#)<sup>1</sup>, [Lawrence RE](#), [Demro C](#), [Appelbaum PS](#), [Dixon LB](#).

### Author information

#### Abstract

**AIM:** Within schizophrenia, genetic factors contribute greatly to risk, yet genetic testing for the disorder is not available. For some individuals with specific genotypes, **cannabis** use may increase risk of schizophrenia. It is possible that genetic tests could be offered in the future to inform individuals of the risk of schizophrenia if they use **cannabis**. Previous research, however, provides little guidance on how young adults might respond to such tests.

**METHODS:** We assessed a group of young adults (n = 83) to determine how the perceived magnitude of increased risk for schizophrenia in the presence of **cannabis** use influences decisions to undergo genetic testing, as well as subsequent attitudes and intentions towards **cannabis** use.

**RESULTS:** Participants were significantly more likely to indicate willingness to get tested if the results identified a 10% risk versus a 2% risk of schizophrenia. Participants also indicated that if the results of their test reflected increased risk due to **cannabis** use, it would be more important to avoid **cannabis** in the 10% risk scenario as compared to the 2% risk scenario. These findings remained consistent among a subset of participants who indicated **cannabis** use.

**CONCLUSIONS:** Results suggest that **cannabis** users and non-users were positively influenced in terms of intentions to change behaviour based on the magnitude of risk conveyed by genetic testing. These findings provide an initial step towards understanding young people's attitudes towards genetic testing and may help prepare interventions specifically tailored around **cannabis** use reduction for people at risk for schizophrenia.

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**KEYWORDS:** attitude; **cannabis**; genetic testing; schizophrenia

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