

UC CAR Weekly Newsletter 6.30.2023

Welcome to the weekly newsletter from the Center for Addiction Research! Each newsletter includes highlights from addiction in the news topics, active funding opportunities offered by NIDA/NIAAA, and information about any new publications from CAR members. Please email Jen Rowe ([roweji@ucmail.uc.edu](mailto:roweji@ucmail.uc.edu)) to change your communication preferences. Thank you.

Thank you for your interest in the Center for Addiction Research - our mission is to accelerate scientific progress in the prevention and treatment of substance use disorders and their consequences by fostering research collaborations across: 1) UC departments, colleges, and centers including Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center; 2) Local, regional, and state community and governmental partners; and 3) Other academic institutions and industry."



## **UC/ Regional News**

### **Center for Addiction Research Upcoming Summer Speaker Series**

Back by popular demand, the Center for Addiction Research will hold its second of three 2023 virtual Summer Speaker Series events, Wednesday, July 12 at 12pm on "The Perfect Storm: Examining the Associations Among Alcohol Use and Intimate Partner Violence in the Age of COVID-19", with presenter and CAR member, Dr. Joel Sprunger. The series is sponsored by Center for Clinical & Translational Science & Training. [\(pdf invitation attached\)](#)

**>> Register for any of the presentations**

### **An illegal psychedelic could change how KY treats opioid addiction. It's not without risk**

LEXINGTON, Ky. -- Jessica Blackburn didn't know she was addicted to opioids until her body's first withdrawal. It was 2004, and she was 18. For the last year, she'd swallowed oxycontin recreationally at high school parties in Betsy Lane, her Eastern Kentucky hometown. The first time her body responded to a deficit of pills, Blackburn thought she'd caught a bad case of the flu. It was her high school boyfriend who explained that her body had become dependent. "It all just kind of clicked," Blackburn, 36, said recently by phone. Her active use defined and derailed the next decade of her life. Blackburn's parents pulled her out of college and forced her into the first of many stints at a residential treatment center...

### **Southern Indiana to receive more than \$600K in state grants to help with addiction recovery efforts**

Southern Indiana agencies will receive more than \$600,000 in matching state grants to help with addiction recovery efforts — part of a multi-state settlement with drug companies accused of fueling the opioid crisis. The awards are part of \$19 million dollars in recently announced state grants. Those funds come from Indiana's portion of a \$26 billion multi-state settlement with drug companies accused of fueling the opioid crisis. Organizations will use the money to help with addiction prevention, treatment and recovery services. More than \$442,000 will go toward the Clark County VIP program, and the county will match it dollar for dollar. Health Officer Dr. Eric Yazel said it will help agencies focus...

### **National News**

#### **Lean body mass, age linked with alcohol elimination rates in women**

Lean body mass is defined in the study -- published in the journal Alcohol Clinical and Experimental Research -- as one's total body weight minus fat. "We believe the strong relationship we found between participants' lean body mass and their alcohol elimination rate is due to the association that exists between lean body mass and lean liver tissue -- the part of the liver responsible for metabolizing alcohol," said research group leader M. Yanina Pepino, a professor of food science and human nutrition at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. To explore links between body composition and alcohol elimination rates, the team conducted a secondary analysis of data from a study...

#### **Home delivery of alcohol expanded during pandemic, with permanent effects on health**

During the COVID-19 pandemic home liquor delivery soared in the United States, as did binge drinking along with it, a new study finds. "'Home delivery' refers to when restaurants, bars or retailers use their own employees or a third-party delivery system such as DoorDash or Uber Eats to deliver alcohol to consumers' homes," said researcher Elyse Grossman, a social and behavioral sciences administrator at the U.S. National Institute on Drug Abuse. "Although the number of states that allowed home delivery was already trending upwards during the last two decades, the COVID-19 pandemic dramatically increased..."

#### **Adolescent Alcohol Dependency Linked With Later Depression Risk**

A new study led by researchers from University College London (UCL) and the University of Bristol suggests that teenagers displaying symptoms of alcohol addiction have an increased likelihood of experiencing depression by their mid-20s. Interestingly, the study, which was published in The Lancet Psychiatry, found that frequent alcohol consumption, even in large quantities, did not necessarily predict a higher risk of depression unless there were indications of dependency. Co-lead author Dr. Gemma Lewis (UCL Psychiatry) said: "By using a large, longitudinal dataset, we have found evidence that..."

## **Study: Link Between Cannabis Use Disorder and Schizophrenia Highest Among Young Men**

Young men with cannabis use disorder (CUD) are at an increased risk of developing schizophrenia, a new study has found. Researchers estimated that up to 30% of cases of schizophrenia among men aged 21-30 might have been prevented if CUD had been averted. Previous research has found that the use of THC, the main psychoactive ingredient in cannabis, can trigger or worsen schizophrenia, and that this risk increases along with frequency of cannabis use. This study sought to explore the association between CUD and schizophrenia across genders and ages and to uncover the...

## **Risk of cannabis addiction higher for young men, people with anxiety**

Nearly five per cent of cannabis users are at risk of developing an addiction to the drug, a new study from Statistics Canada says. The analysis of data collected from more than 101,000 people aged 15 and older as part of the annual Canadian Community Health Survey showed that 4.7 per cent of people who used cannabis in the past year were at risk of addiction. Those people were considered to have "impaired control" over their cannabis use, StatCan said. The finding is based on phone and in-person surveys done in 2019 and 2020, but StatCan said the pandemic lowered the response rate by nearly half in 2020, from...

## **New Report Finds Major Geographic Smoking Disparities Across Midwest and Southern States**

WASHINGTON, June 28, 2023 /PRNewswire/ -- A new report released today shows how major geographic smoking disparities are impacting residents of 12 contiguous states throughout the Midwest and South, creating a region dubbed "Tobacco Nation." The report from Truth Initiative, the national public health organization inspiring lives free from smoking, vaping, and nicotine, analyzes how smoking prevalence is nearly 50% higher in these 12 states compared to the rest of the nation, with a smoker living in Tobacco Nation smoking on average nearly 500 more cigarettes per year than the average smoker elsewhere in the United States. These states frequently have fewer key policies proven...

## **2006 to 2019 saw significant drop in nicotine dependence prevalence**

Among U.S. adults with cigarette use and all subgroups aged 26 years and older, there were significant reductions in nicotine dependence prevalence from 2006 to 2019, according to a study published online June 23 in JAMA Network Open. Beth Han, M.D., Ph.D., M.P.H., from the U.S. National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, and colleagues examined whether and how nicotine dependence varies by year, age, psychiatric comorbidities, and sociodemographic characteristics among U.S. adults with cigarette use. Data were included from 152,354 U.S. community-dwelling individuals aged...

### **Supporting smokers with new lung health checks could save thousands of lives**

Researchers and national cancer charities strongly welcome the UK Government's decision to back National Screening Committee recommendations for a new national screening program for lung cancer with smoking cessation support as "integral." Researchers at the University of Nottingham tested integrated smoking cessation support for people receiving lung cancer screening. Over 80% of individuals reporting current smoking at the time of attending for screening accepted an offer of stop smoking support and over 30% of these reported successfully quitting smoking, demonstrating the power of...

### **Adaptation to pharmacotherapy does not up smoking cessation in Black adults**

For Black adults who smoke, adaptation to varenicline and/or bupropion plus nicotine patch (NP) does not improve abstinence rates compared with NP monotherapy, according to a study published online June 20 in JAMA Network Open. Nicole L. Nollen, Ph.D., from the University of Kansas School of Medicine in Kansas City, and colleagues examined the efficacy of multiple smoking cessation pharmacotherapy adaptations based on treatment response in Black adults who smoke daily in a randomized clinical trial of adapted therapy (ADT) or enhanced usual care (UC). Both groups received 18 weeks...

### **Tobacco smoke exposure may increase heavy metal levels in children's saliva**

Secondhand tobacco smoke continues to be a major source of indoor air pollution that causes more than 41,000 nonsmoking adults to die every year in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The exposure is even more dire for children, who can be more affected by less smoke. It can increase frequency and severity of asthma attacks, respiratory infections, cancer, sudden infant death syndrome and behavioral problems. Now, for the first time, Penn State-led research has shown exposure to tobacco smoke increases the presence of heavy metals in...

### **U.S. e-cigarette sales jumped 46% from 2020 to 2022, CDC says**

Monthly e-cigarette sales increased by 46.6% in nearly three full years from 2020 to late 2022, the Centers for Disease Control found in a study published Friday. As sales increased from 15.5 million units in January 2020 to 22.7 million units in December 2022, the number of brands increased by 46.2%, to 269. Sales of youth-appealing flavors such as fruit, candy, and desserts also increased, the CDC said in its latest Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. E-cigarettes pose a health risk to brain development among youth because of the nicotine found in the e-cigarettes, officials said. "Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine, and nicotine is highly addictive and can also harm brain development in..."

### **E-Cigs Are Still Flooding the US, Addicting Teens With Higher Nicotine Doses**

When the FDA first asserted the authority to regulate e-cigarettes in 2016, many people assumed the agency would quickly get rid of vapes with flavors like cotton

candy, gummy bears, and Froot Loops that appeal to kids. Instead, the FDA allowed all e-cigarettes already on the market to stay while their manufacturers applied for the OK to market them. Seven years later, vaping has ballooned into an \$8.2 billion industry, and manufacturers are flooding the market with thousands of products — most sold illegally and without FDA permission — that can be far more addictive. “The FDA has failed to protect...

### **Vape Sales Soared in 2022, Especially Flavors Appealing to Youth**

THURSDAY, June 22, 2023 (HealthDay News) -- Despite a federal ban that has removed many flavored vapes from the U.S. market, monthly e-cigarette sales jumped 47% in the first two years of the pandemic, a new government study shows. "The surge in total e-cigarette sales during 2020-2022 was driven by non-tobacco flavored e-cigarette sales, such as menthol, which dominates the prefilled cartridge market, and fruit and candy flavors, which lead the disposable e-cigarette market," said lead study author Fatma Romeh Ali, a health economist at the CDC Foundation. Sales of menthol-flavored electronic...

### **FDA Inspection Blitz Leads to More Than 180 Warning Letters to Retailers for the Illegal Sale of Youth-Appealing Elf Bar and Esco Bars E-Cigarettes**

Today, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration is announcing it has issued warning letters to 189 retailers for selling unauthorized tobacco products, specifically Elf Bar and Esco Bars products. Both brands are disposable e-cigarettes that come in flavors known to appeal to youth, including bubblegum and cotton candy. “The FDA is prepared to use all of its authorities to ensure these, and other illegal and youth-appealing products, stay out of the hands of kids,” said FDA Commissioner Robert M. Califf, M.D. “We are committed to a multipronged approach using regulation, compliance and...

### **April 2022 to March 2023 saw rise in e-cigarette poisoning exposures**

During April 2022 to March 2023, the number of reported U.S. electronic cigarette (e-cigarette) poisoning exposure cases increased, according to research published in the June 23 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. Nicole A. Tashakkori, M.P.H., from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in Silver Spring, Maryland, and colleagues examined the number and characteristics of e-cigarette exposed cases in the United States by analyzing data from the National Poison Data System for April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2023. The researchers found that...

### **Vaping a gateway to smoking for non-smokers, research shows**

While vaping provides a pathway to help smokers wanting to quit, for non-smokers it may be the first step on a pathway to taking up smoking, a new study has shown. Led by University of Otago post graduate student Andre Mason and Associate Professor Damian Scarf, of the University of Otago's Department of Psychology, the collaborative research, published today in the Drug and Alcohol Review, analyzed

data related to smoking and vaping status of New Zealanders from the 2018-2020 New Zealand Attitudes and Values survey. Associate Professor Scarf says broadly, the prevalence of smoking was found...

### **Vague warning language impacts perceptions of vaping risks, study finds**

When it comes to e-cigarette warning labels, respondents in focus groups organized by Cornell University researchers were clear: Give it to me straight. But approximately 20 years after they hit the market, electronic cigarettes' precise health risks remain unclear. And for adults trying to quit smoking conventional cigarettes, ambiguity in messaging can skew perceptions of the health benefits of using these products as an alternative to combustible cigarettes. A multidisciplinary team led by Jeff Niederdeppe, professor of communication in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS) and...

### **New study reveals brain's potential to regulate fentanyl consumption**

The opioid crisis continues to pose a grave public health concern, with synthetic opioids such as fentanyl posing a major risk for development of addiction and death due to overdose. A recent study by the research group led by Prof. Ami Citri at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem's Edmond and Lily Safra Center for Brain Sciences has unveiled crucial insights into the brain's potential ability to regulate the urge to consume fentanyl. This discovery offers a glimmer of hope in the ongoing battle against opioid addiction. The study, titled "Claustal neurons projecting to frontal cortex restrict..."

### **Easier access to opioid painkillers may reduce opioid-related deaths**

Increasing access to prescription opioid painkillers may reduce opioid overdose deaths in the United States, according to a new Rutgers study. "When access to prescription opioids is heavily restricted, people will seek out opioids that are unregulated," said Grant Victor, an assistant professor in the Rutgers School of Social Work and lead author of the study published in the Journal of Substance Use and Addiction Treatment. "The opposite may also be true; our findings suggest that restoring easier access to opioid pain medications may protect against fatal overdoses." America's opioid crisis...

### **Editorial: Opioid settlement must avoid mistakes of squandered 1990s tobacco money**

By recklessly and deceptively marketing powerful opioids such as Oxycontin as non-addictive miracle drugs, major pharmaceutical manufacturers, suppliers and distributors triggered an epidemic of addiction that became the nation's top public health crisis. Emerging in the the late 1990s, it has killed nearly one million Americans and addicted millions more to prescription painkillers and opioid-related street drugs such as heroin. Today, three million Americans are addicted to opioids, and more than 100,000 die of drug overdoses annually, including 5,000 a year in Pennsylvania. In Allegheny County...

### **Guidelines to help clinicians on safer opioid deprescribing**

Australian and international experts have released 11 recommendations on when, how, and in what situation it may be appropriate for clinicians to reduce opioid use, by placing the patient at the center of the equation. The University of Sydney led guidelines recommend that clinicians develop personalized deprescribing plans from the beginning for any patient being prescribed opioids. The guidelines also advise clinicians against abruptly stopping opioid treatment without gradually reducing the dose or transitioning to different treatments, saying it could increase risk of withdrawal...

### **Synthetic drugs boom fuels illicit markets worldwide: UN**

The cheap, easy, and fast production of synthetic drugs has radically transformed illicit drug markets around the world, with "lethal results", the United Nations warned Sunday. While more people are battling drug addiction, criminals continue to exploit conflicts and global crises to expand drug production, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) said in its annual report. "Fentanyl has drastically altered the opioid market in North America," the UNODC said in a statement accompanying the report. In 2021 alone, the majority of about 90,000 opioid related overdose deaths...

### **US launches prosecutions of Chinese companies on charges of trafficking fentanyl ingredients**

The U.S. Justice Department filed criminal charges on Friday against four Chinese companies and eight individuals for allegedly trafficking the chemicals used to make the highly addictive painkiller fentanyl in the United States and Mexico. The three separate indictments unsealed in federal court in New York represent the first prosecutions to charge China-based chemical companies and Chinese nationals with illegally selling the chemicals used to make fentanyl, which has been blamed for a deadly overdose crisis. A spokesperson for the Chinese Embassy condemned the charges, accusing the U.S. government of seeking...

### **Race- and gender-specific interventions may lower drug overdose death rates**

Interventions to address stimulant and opioid use that consider race and gender may prove more effective at preventing overdose deaths than current methods, according to a Penn State-led team of researchers who studied how drug treatment admissions and overdose deaths differed among race and gender. The researchers found that minority communities bore the brunt of the crisis in both urban and rural areas. They reported their findings in the journal *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*. The United States recorded more than 580,000 opioid and stimulant-related overdose deaths in the last 20 years, with...

### **FDA Issues First Draft Guidance on Clinical Trials with Psychedelic Drugs**

Today, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration published a new draft guidance to highlight fundamental considerations to researchers investigating the use of psychedelic drugs for potential treatment of medical conditions, including psychiatric or substance use disorders. This is the first FDA draft guidance that presents considerations to industry for designing clinical trials for psychedelic drugs. There has been growing interest in the therapeutic potential of psychedelic drugs in recent years. They are being evaluated for use in the potential treatment of conditions such as depression...

### **New review finds benefits of widely used treatment for gambling problems may be overstated**

A new meta-analysis published in the journal Addiction presents important findings that shed light on the effectiveness of psychological treatments for gambling problems. The analysis provides both positive and negative insights, including uncovering potential overstatements of the benefits associated with using cognitive-behavioral techniques (CBTs). Significantly more funds are essential to increase the rigor of studies and to improve understanding of treatment impact among individuals experiencing gambling problems. The analysis pooled the results of 29 randomized controlled trials of CBTs on...

## **Funding Opportunities**



[NOT-AA-23-011](#)

[Notice of Special Interest: Secondary Analyses of Existing Alcohol Research Data](#)

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