

Review of Clinical Pharmacology and Pharmacokinetics

ΕΠΙΘΕΟΡΗΣΗ ΚΛΙΝΙΚΗΣ ΦΑΡΜΑΚΟΛΟΓΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΦΑΡΜΑΚΟΚΙΝΗΤΙΚΗΣ
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Letter from Guest Editor

The progress and contributions of 20th century pharmacology has been immense with over 20 pharmacologists to have received Nobel Prizes. This field of medical studies covers many areas; it is built upon and at the same time incorporates many disciplines such as biochemistry, biology physiology, pathology, anatomy, molecular biology, while the development of new analytical and experimental techniques and instruments has given a new boost in pharmacological research. Yet, although a remarkable progress has been made in developing new drugs and in understanding how they act, the challenges are endless. Integrating a depth of knowledge in many related scientific disciplines, pharmacologists offer a unique perspective to solving drug and chemical related problems which impinge on human health, with ultimate goal the treatment and prevention of major diseases.

The 5th Panhellenic Congress of Pharmacology focuses on four *hot* subjects: Regenerative Pharmacology, Herbal Medicines, Pharmacology of Abuse and Dependence, and Education in Pharmacology.

- *Regenerative Pharmacology* is one of the newest areas in Pharmacology, represents a groundbreaking field of research and has the potential to radically alter the treatment of diseases and disorders.

- *Herbal Medicines* have acquired an important percentage among the drug used; according to WHO 80% of people worldwide rely on herbal medicines for some aspect of their primary health care. This continuously increasing use of plant medicines imposes the need for establishing new regulations.

- *Pharmacology of Abuse and Dependence*, still not a well defined area, presents a lot of challenge for researchers and clinicians.

- *Education in Pharmacology* remains a hot subject in the Medical education, following the knowledge *explosion* of the last decades accompanied by a decreasing reliance on didactic teaching. The crucial question is: how and what should we teach?

We hope that the round table discussions along with the invited lectures, included in this abstract book, will raise new and intriguing ques-

tions that will further stimulate research, and will contribute to new therapeutic approaches and attitudes.

I would like to thank the Editorial Board of *Review of Clinical Pharmacology and Pharmacokinetics* in particular Journal Editors Prof. S.T. Plessas and Dr C.T. Plessas for invitation and for providing the suitable and high-standard forum through which new research findings will become available to the scientific community.

The Guest Editor

Charis Liapi

Assist. Professor in Pharmacology
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Glutamatergic Alterations Following Cannabinoid Administration

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INTRODUCTION

Cannabinoids are considered as psychotropic agents as they act on the reward system and affect memory and other cognitive functions. Glutamate, the main excitatory neurotransmitter/neuromodulator of the central nervous system is expected to play a major role in mediating psychotropic properties of cannabinoids. The aim of the present study was to investigate the response of the glutamatergic system to acute administration of cannabinoid agonists.

METHODS

Male Sprague – Dawley rats, weighing 250-350 g, were used throughout this study. Δ^9 -tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the active ingredient of cannabis, WIN 55212-2, a synthetic cannabinoid agonist, and vehicle were administered to different groups of rats. One hour after injection, the animals were sacrificed and discrete rat brain regions were dissected for glutamate analysis using High Performance Liquid Chromatography (HPLC).

RESULTS

THC modified glutamatergic tissue concentrations in specific brain regions, in a manner

indicating an important effect on glutamatergic activity. Concerning WIN administration, the effect on glutamatergic activity paralleled, to some extent, THC administration.

DISCUSSION

Present findings indicate that cannabinoids play an important role in the modulation of glutamatergic activity and this effect could be related to the psychotropic properties of these substances and their impact on cognitive functions.

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