Juicing Raw Cannabis

By Martin A. Lee

William Courtney, a well-known Mendi-

n county-Castroville-based physician, recom-

mends eating — or juicing and then drinking — raw can-

nabis that does not have any pesticides applied at any point in its life cycle. Make sure there are no toxic miticides.

Courtney recommends: “expanding our use of cannabis from the 10-milligram psycho-

chic dose to the 600- to 1000 milligram dietary dose.”

A dietary supplement

William Courtney recommends using 25 large fan leaves per day in juice, salsa, pesto, salad, etc. If you have access to fresh bud, “you can get all of the valuable cannabinoids you need in terms of freshness — is an option for all too few in our society and throughout the world.”

The Courtneys advise: “If you know a local organic grower, ask if you can use their excess leaves. Also, ask about purchasing bud in its raw state. Only use organic can-

nabis that does not have any pesticides applied at any point in its life cycle. Make sure there are no toxic miticides.”

Ambiguous information re dosing

To determine the cannabinoid content of fan leaves, a prospective juicer sent 30 large leaves from a floweroming Oxlata Rx plant in the Werc Shop in Los Angeles for analysis. They found that a combined total of 11.5 milligrams of THC and CBD (cannabidiol in its raw state) to 2000 mg of canopy bio-

noids, by this measure, one would need to juice more than 1500 leaves every day to achieve a significant amount of bud.

70 Trillion Interactions?

Courtney credits Ruth Ross of the Uni-

versity of Aberdeen with the discovery that CB2 receptors are localized predominantly out-

side the brain and central nervous system. THC also binds to CB1, which is concen-

trated in the brain and the central nervous system (CNS). This is what makes a person feel psychoactive.

CBD and CBDa

There have been numerous studies demon-

strating CBD’s potential efficacy in treating heart disease, diabetes, cancer, and neurological illnesses — but very few studies involving CBDA. During a talk at the 2012 Pati-

ents Out of Time conference in Tac-

son, Courtney frequently referred to CBDA as “the” cannabinoid with Emphasis on the Effect.

McAllister found that “Compared to CBD, CBDA had neg-

ligible effects in cell viability as-

say against multiple cancers.”

Pioneering research conducted by Dr. Sean McAllister at the California Pacific Medical Center in San Francisco, has estab-

lished that CBD and (THC) are potent inhibitors of breast cancer cell prolifera-

tion, metastasis, and tumor formation. But he found that “Compared to CBD, CBDA had negligible effects in cell viability as against multiple cancers. We therefore never-

ever took a great interest in the molecule.”

McAllister noted the findings of a 2006 report, “Antitumor Activity of CBDA and Other Cannabinoids with Emphasis on the Effect of Cannabinoid on Human Breast Car-

cinoma,” by Alessandro Lodato and a group of Italian scientists: “For in vitro studies, the cannabinoids under investigation were screened for their ability to reduce cell prolif-

eration on a collection of tumor cell lines. Cannabinoids always exhibited the highest potency... Cannabidiol acid was the least potent compound. Among the other plant cannabinoids, cannabigerol was al-

most always the second most potent com-

pound, followed by cannabichromene.”

Kristen Courtney treated herself by juic-

ing THC dominant cannabis at a time when there were no analytical labs serving the medical cannabis community in Cali-

fornia. In recent years, as CBD-rich plants have been identified and found to be medi-

cally beneficial, the Courtneys began to ad-

vocate juicing for CBDA content.

Cannabidiol is psychoactive in its acid as well as neutral form; thus “psychoac-

tivity” is not a factor at any dose of CBD. So why should one go through the trouble of procuring and juicing large quantities of CBD-rich cannabis when measured doses of CBDA-rich concentrates are available for patients?

Courtney has suggested that neutral can-

nabinoids are inferior because they are “synthetic,” by which he means not pro-

duced by the living plant. But as the plant dries, decarboxylation occurs naturally. In some tropical cannabis strains, significant decarboxylation happens before the plant is harvested.

A Patient’s Lament

A middle-aged man with prostate cancer, a patient of Dr. Courtney’s, contacted Proj-

ect CBD, seeking information about where to obtain large quantities of CBD-rich mari-

juana in order to juice it. He didn’t want to smoke it or vaporize it, he explained, be-

cause “Dr. Courtney says it doesn’t work if it’s heated.”

Perhaps this desperate patient misunder-

stood Dr. Courtney. Or perhaps he was mis-

leading about the fact that ingesting cannabidiol acids is the best way to utilize the plant for therapeutic purposes.

There’s not a lot of science about can-

nabidiol acids in general and CBD acid in particular. From what we know, these compounds have medicinal value and juic-

ing cannabis may help people with certain conditions. But how these benefits are con-

ferred is not entirely clear.

One certain advantage of ingesting fresh raw cannabis is that you’re getting most of all not all of the volatile terpenes, and plenty of chlorophyll. Juicing organic fruits and vegetables, especially leafy greens, is a health-positive exercise, even when can-

nabidiol is not a part of the mix.

An interesting experiment would be to compare the therapeutic outcomes of those who juice CBD-rich cannabis with another group of people who juice wheat grass or leafy greens while taking mea-

sured doses of decarboxylated CBD-rich extracts.

There are many valid ways to administer medicinal cannabis. One size doesn’t fit all with respect to can-

nabidiol therapeutics.

Copyright 2012 by O’Shaughnessy’s. All rights reserved. Address reprint requests to editor@beyondthecbd.com

William L. Courtney, MD

Cannabidiol is nonpsychoactive in its acid as well as neutral form; thus “psychotropic” is not a factor at any dose of CBD.