

## What role do you think substance use may play in catatonia?

**Dr. Beach:**

Substance use is also a risk factor for catatonia. The biggest way that comes into play, that I see, is when patients are withdrawing from alcohol or from benzodiazepines. So when they're in a GABAergic withdrawal state, they are highly vulnerable to catatonia. We will sometimes see patients, particularly in the ICU setting, who develop catatonia in the setting of alcohol withdrawal. And I think, in that case, the withdrawal from the substance plays a large role.

In terms of other substance use, catatonia has been described in other things. It's been described with cocaine intoxication. It's been described with some hallucinogen use. I would say it's not something we see super commonly in those settings, but certainly want to have it on your differential.

With regards to cannabis in catatonia, there's not a lot of great literature. It's been described in terms of acute cannabis use, but it's not clear, as far as I know, whether chronic use or regular use of cannabis predisposes to catatonia. You could assume it probably does because we know that heavy cannabis use increases the risk for psychosis, and catatonia and psychosis are highly comorbid and very much related. But I don't think it's ever actually been demonstrated.