

■ FIGURE 12.16 A Brief History of Cannabis

Source: R. Murray, Morrison, Henquet, & Di Forti (2007, p. 886).

2727 BC	The Pên—ts'ao Ching, the oldest known pharmacopoeia, describes medicinal properties of cannabis, as well as psychiatric side-effects from excessive use.	1987	The link between cannabis use and the development of schizophrenia is shown for the first time.
~1200 BC	In the Indus Valley civilization, cannabis is regarded as one of five sacred plants: "a source of happiness and bringer of freedom."	1988	Cannabis receptors are discovered by Howlett and Devane.
1894	The seven-volume Report of the Indian Hemp Drugs Commission concludes that "There is no evidence of any weight regarding mental and moral injuries from moderate use of these drugs."	1990	The cannabinoid 1 (CB1) receptor is cloned by Bonner and colleagues.
1928	Recreational use of cannabis is banned in the United Kingdom.	1992	The first endocannabinoid is discovered and termed anandamide.
1937	The Marijuana Tax Act effectively prohibits recreational cannabis use in the United States.	1994	SR141716 (rimonabant), the first selective CB1 antagonist, is discovered. Germany decriminalizes possession of small quantities of cannabis for occasional use. In the United Kingdom, the maximum fine for possession increases from £500 to £2500.
1942	Cannabis is removed from the American Pharmacopoeia.	1995	A second endocannabinoid, 2-arachidonylglycerol, is identified.
1961	60 nations sign the Uniform Drug Convention, which pledges to end cannabis use within 25 years.	1997	A leading British newspaper, the <i>Independent on Sunday</i> , launches a "decriminalize cannabis" campaign.
1965	Mechoulam and colleagues isolate and subsequently synthesize Δ^9 -tetrahydrocannabinol (THC).	1996	California becomes the first state in the United States to legalize the use of medical cannabis.
1967	Groups such as NORML (National Organisation for the Reform of Marijuana Laws), in the United States, and SOMA, in the United Kingdom, lobby for the legalization of cannabis. Over 3,000 people attend a smoke-in in Hyde Park, London.	2001	Endocannabinoids are shown to inhibit the release of amino-acid neurotransmitters in the hippocampus and the cerebellum.
1970	It becomes clear that the psychological effects of cannabis are attributable to THC.	2002	Endocannabinoids are shown to be involved in long-term synaptic plasticity.
1976	In the Netherlands, the Opium Act separates cannabis from hard drugs. Subsequently, the sale of cannabis is tolerated under strict conditions. In the United States, government funding for medical research on cannabis is banned.	2003	The first evidence that endocannabinoids mediate spike-timing dependent plasticity is discovered.
1982	The National Institutes of Health-sponsored Relman study concludes that "... there is no evidence that cannabis causes permanent health damage, ... affects brain structure, ... is addictive or leads to harder drug [use] ..."	2004	In the United Kingdom, cannabis is moved from a Class B to a Class C drug; possession drops to a maximum 2-year, rather than 5-year, prison sentence.
		2005	In Canada, a cannabis-based medicine is licensed for the treatment of spasticity in multiple sclerosis.
		2012	Washington and Colorado become the first states to legalize recreational cannabis use. By this year, Montana, New Mexico, Vermont, Michigan, New Jersey, Arizona, and Massachusetts have legalized medical cannabis use as well.
		2016	29 U.S. states allow for medical cannabis use and eight states allow recreational use.