

ABSTRACT

Presently, addiction constitutes a major global issue, both for people directly affected by it, and for society. Many people would benefit from innovative, safe, and effective treatments. Psychedelic renaissance in the 21st century brings potential solutions for some of the most common psychiatric issues, including addiction. The molecule subjected to the most extensive scientific research in this area is ibogaine – atypical psychedelic of plant origin displaying a complex mixture of dissociative, oneirophrenic, and hallucinogenic effects. This thesis is a non-systematic review of scientific literature published mostly after the year 2000, aiming to summarise information about the therapeutic potential of ibogaine in treating addiction, including risks, efficacy, and comparison to other types of treatment. Total number of citations included in this thesis is 92. Published scientific literature provides several general conclusions. Ibogaine is a potent substance that has caused several fatalities. These instances and further research suggest that ibogaine is dangerous particularly for people suffering from cardiovascular health conditions, in combination with other substances, and in absence of medical supervision. Clinical studies show, that in certain conditions, and in a controlled environment, ingestion of ibogaine can be safe. It also constitutes a potentially effective tool for treating addiction, but more rigorous studied are needed to draw final conclusions. Available case studies, observational and retrospective studied provide some evidence of ibogaine’s efficacy in addiction treatment, where subjects tend to report absence of cravings after ingestion of ibogaine. This is mediated by long-lasting and complex effects of ibogaine and its primary metabolite noribogaine at multiple binding sites in the central nervous system, and it is comprehensively unique. Nevertheless, it is not a magic bullet and its implementation into practice will probably be neither fast, nor easy. Still, in the future, it could potentially become an alternative treatment option for some people suffering from addiction.

Keywords: ibogaine, psychedelics, addiction treatment, experimental psychopharmacology