



Get to Know the Facts. Does Marijuana Help Alleviate Medical Conditions?

Despite advertising that components of the marijuana plant can help alleviate certain types of medical conditions, marijuana may cause further harm in many instances. This document highlights what the research and experts across different medical disciplines have to say about the effects of marijuana on various health concerns.

Please note: in 2019 the US Surgeon General, Jerome Adams, stated that NO amount of marijuana is safe for adolescents and pregnant woman. If you or someone you know has a medical concern, consult with your health care provider before seeking alternative treatments, as marijuana can negatively interact with medications or your health.

Glaucoma

The largest association of eye physicians and surgeons in the world, the American Academy of Ophthalmology, and the American Glaucoma Society do not endorse marijuana or its derivatives - like CBD - as a glaucoma treatment. There is no accepted, current research that demonstrates CBD or THC to be an effective treatment for glaucoma.

Source: <https://www.aaopt.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/medical-marijuana-glaucoma-treatment>



Epilepsy

The FDA has approved Epidiolex, a CBD oral solution, for the treatment of seizures related to two forms of epilepsy: Lennox-Gastaut syndrome and Dravet syndrome in patients age two or older.

Source: <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-approves-first-drug-comprised-active-ingredient-derived-marijuana-treat-rare-severe-forms>



Multiple Sclerosis (MS)

Reviews of published studies have shown that synthetic cannabinoids (man-made chemicals similar to THC and CBD) benefit symptoms of MS-related pain and muscle tightness. The National MS Society recognizes that additional research is needed.

Source: <https://www.nationalmssociety.org/Treating-MS/Complementary-Alternative-Medicines/Marijuana/Marijuana-FAQs>



Cardiovascular Health

The American Heart Association (AHA) states that the the negative health implications of cannabis should be formally and consistently emphasized in policy. The AHA is committed to its efforts to limit the smoking and vaping of any products and banning cannabis use for youth.

Source: <https://www.heart.org/-/media/files/about-us/policy-research/policy-positions/tobacco-and-clean-air/marijuana-policy-supplement-to-our-scientific-statement.pdf?la=en>



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Cancer

Dronabinol and nabilone, man-made forms of THC, are approved by the FDA to treat nausea and vomiting caused by cancer chemotherapy. It is not recommended to rely on marijuana alone as treatment for cancer. THC has been linked to certain cancers and smoking in general is known to cause lung damage.

Source: <https://www.cancer.org/treatment/treatments-and-side-effects/complementary-and-alternative-medicine/marijuana-and-cancer.html>



Mental Illnesses

Marijuana is not recommended to treat mental illnesses. Studies link marijuana use to depression, anxiety, suicide planning, and psychotic episodes. The risk is highest for the most frequent users.

Source: <https://www.samhsa.gov/marijuana>



Respiratory Health

The American Lung Association states that smoking marijuana clearly damages the human lung, and regular use leads to chronic bronchitis and can cause an immune-compromised person to be more susceptible to lung infections. Additionally, vaping marijuana has resulted in severe lung injuries.

Source: <https://www.lung.org/quit-smoking/smoking-facts/health-effects/marijuana-and-lung-health>



Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

To date, there is limited research and no clinical guidance on the use of marijuana as treatment for autism spectrum disorder.

Source: <https://autismsciencefoundation.org/what-is-autism/statement-on-use-of-medical-marijuana-for-people-with-autism/>



Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)

The FDA has approved the use of dronabinol (Marinol), a THC-containing prescription drug, to stimulate appetite in people with AIDS wasting syndrome. With the advent of antiretroviral medications this has become a very rare condition.

Source: <https://www.webmd.com/hiv-aids/hiv-and-marijuana>

