

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF MEDICAL CANNABIS

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Abstract

Medical cannabis is now clearly defined as buds, cannabis concentrates or synthetic cannabinoids that are used for medicinal purposes. The main difference between medical marijuana and regular marijuana is the amount of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the main psychoactive component. In regular marijuana its content is 5%-35%, in medical marijuana - up to 1%. The first person to use cannabis as an anaesthetic was the Chinese surgeon Hua To. He ground the plant into powder and mixed it with rice wine before surgeries, thus anaesthetising the patient. Today, cannabis is one of the 50 main herbs used in traditional Chinese medicine. Cannabis is used to treat rashes, wounds and ulcers, stimulate the nervous system, prescribed for flu, postpartum complications and poisoning. It is also used as an anthelmintic and diuretic. In ancient Egypt, medical marijuana is mentioned in several papyri at once. Texts show that the Egyptians used cannabis to relieve pain from haemorrhoids and to treat eye inflammation.

Introduction

The modern history of medical cannabis

With the advent of aspirin, the medicinal properties of marijuana lost their relevance for a while. In the 18th and 20th centuries, a multitude of doctors never stopped experimenting with medical cannabis. But bureaucratic and governmental components led to the official prohibition of marijuana in the 20th century. The starting point for its rehabilitation was a report from the US National Academy of Medicine, which stated that there was insufficient evidence of cannabis' harm to human health. In 2020, the UN removed marijuana and its derivatives from the list of the most dangerous drugs. The decision was based on the WHO's 2019 recommendations.

Medical use A wide variety of cannabinoid preparations, with different dosage forms, concentrations of active and psychoactive substances and routes of administration, are used in different regions of the world. Their use is based on the assumption that such preparations are capable of relieving a wide range of symptoms, although there is no definitive evidence that such preparations can relieve a wide range of a wide range of symptoms, although there is often no reliable evidence of their safety and efficacy effectiveness is often lacking. In many cases, it is unclear which cannabinoids (active ingredients and dosages) are contained in such products, which route of administration is most effective or what unwanted side effects may occur. When taking such preparations, patients may mistake a short-term euphorising effect for a lasting therapeutic effect. A number of controlled clinical studies have shown that certain cannabinoids can alleviate the symptoms of some diseases but do not affect the course of the disease itself. An example is:

- Neuropathic pain and spasticity in multiple sclerosis
- Epilepsy



- Antiemetic
- Appetite stimulant

Proponents of the legalisation of cannabis claim that no personality disorders or permanent damage to the nervous system has been detected from smoking the plant. However, animal experiments have shown that long-term exposure to cannabis leads to persistent, long-lasting structural changes in the hippocampus. It is believed that these may have a negative effect on mental state.

The effects of marijuana use, especially in high doses, include:

- Chronic sleep disturbances, irritability, daytime sleepiness, feelings of fatigue, and exercise intolerance;
- flaccid rhinitis and pharyngitis;
- decreased local immune defence and associated frequent episodes of stomatitis, oral candidiasis, gingivitis, tracheitis;
- bronchopulmonary system complications: coughing, severe bronchial asthma, frequent infections, chronic bronchitis, obstructive lung diseases; carcinogenic activity of the components of smoking mixtures cannot be excluded;
- impaired vision, muscle coordination;
- decreased speed of mental and physical reaction;
- impairment of short-term memory, abstract thinking.

The harm of cannabis to a person's psycho-emotional state is being studied. Experts quite admit that the consequences of long-term cannabis use may be associated with a predisposition to depression, panic attacks, affective and delusional disorders, suicide (especially at the peak of withdrawal syndrome). A link between long-term cannabis use and the development of dementia in old age cannot be ruled out.

Short ranking of countries where cannabis is legalised for 2023

- Canada
- Luxembourg
- Switzerland
- Netherlands
- Italy
- Czech Republic
- Malta
- South Africa
- Portugal
- Mexico
- Uruguay
- Several US states

Medical cannabis is a drug that is only used for rare and specific diseases and its use and production is controlled in countries where it is legalised. Depending on how it is used it will be either a drug or a medicine that will help the sick and it is only in our hands how it is used.

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