

Exploring the Potential of Cannabis in Managing Parkinson's Disease

Article By:

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Parkinson's Disease (PD) is a progressive neurological disorder that affects millions of people worldwide, characterized by tremors, stiffness, and difficulty with balance and coordination. This disorder results from the degeneration of dopamine-producing neurons in the brain, leading to a range of symptoms that can severely impact daily life. While medications exist to manage these symptoms, they often come with side effects and may lose efficacy over time. As researchers continue to seek effective treatments for PD, cannabis has emerged as a promising option for managing symptoms and improving the quality of life.

Cannabis contains cannabinoids that interact with the body's endocannabinoid system, a network of chemical signals and cellular receptors that regulate various physiological processes, including mood, pain sensation, and movement. Two primary cannabinoids, THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) and CBD (cannabidiol), have been studied for their potential therapeutic effects on PD.

According to an October 2024 review article, "[CBD's potential impact on Parkinson's disease: An updated overview](#)," preclinical studies show CBD's potential to relieve both motor and non-motor symptoms. For motor symptoms, CBD may offer neuroprotective effects, potentially slowing disease progression. For non-motor symptoms, CBD's anxiolytic and antidepressant properties could provide significant relief, enhancing overall quality of life.

The 2024 article noted, however, that definitive conclusions regarding the efficacy of CBD in the treatment of PD cannot be made as only seven clinical trials have been conducted. To gain a more fulsome understanding of CBD's efficacy, the authors proposed the following approach:

- Large-scale, double-blind, placebo-controlled trials
- Longitudinal studies to investigate the long-term effects of CBD on human health
- Standardized protocols for CBD dosage, administration routes, and outcome measures
- Mechanistic studies to better understand the interaction between CBD and the endocannabinoid system
- Assessment of the potential advantages of combining CBD with other pharmacological treatments
- Assessment of sex and age differences on the effectiveness and safety of CBD
- Stratification of patients according to PD severity to better assess the efficacy of CBD at

different PD stages

Epidiolex, a CBD oral solution for the treatment of certain seizure disorders, is the only FDA-approved prescription CBD medicine. Will the FDA ever approve CBD for the treatment of PD? Only time will tell. A comprehensive assessment of CBD as a therapeutic option for PD will likely take years. We will continue to monitor this promising PD therapy and update this post as warranted.

This article was authored by [Melissa Ratliff, RN, BSN](#), Legal Nurse Consultant.

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