

The Significance of Marijuana in Preventing Nausea and Vomiting in Cancer Patients

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Out of all the cartoon strips based on marijuana leading people to act irrationally, there was one that depicted a patient and a doctor on the front. The patient is wearing a headscarf and is in a wheelchair; he says to the doctor "What can you prescribe me for my side effects of nausea, pain, and lack of appetite?" And the doctor replies with, "A round-trip airline ticket to Colorado, as needed." If that doesn't make one believe in the benefits of marijuana for medical purposes, then nothing else can.

Over the years, there has been a frequent misconception surrounding marijuana that it only has adverse effects on people of all ages. Due to such delusions, marijuana has been banned everywhere except for a few parts of the United States where marijuana is legal. The overdosage of cannabis in teens and adults led the intellectuals to believe that marijuana should not be used for medical purposes. However, studies reveal that marijuana is known to be enriched with healing effects when used for cancer patients specifically.

The name Marijuana is used for the dried leaves, flowers, stems, and seeds from a plant known as *Cannabis Sativa*. Cannabis is known to contain the mind-altering chemical delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and similar components (Andre et al.). Delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol has been reported to relieve people's pain and nausea. It also lessens inflammation and acts as an antioxidant agent. Another component, which is Cannabidiol (CBD) is said to be used for treating seizures and can reduce paranoia and anxiety. Besides these two components, marijuana is reported to have different strains that can be used for other purposes. In cancer patients, the two main side effects that have been widely reported are nausea and vomiting. These two potential side effects occur when the cancer patient is nearing his or her treatment or has undergone treatment. Vomiting takes place within 24 hours of the treatment and can also happen two days after the treatment. Being unable to sleep is also seen as a problem when cancer patients are treated with chemotherapy. Fatigue and nausea lead the cancer patient towards restlessness and that in turn drives the cancer patient to stay awake. In such cases, professionals most often recommend the usage of marijuana as a medicinal herb to help treat cancer patients. Considering the history of marijuana usage for illnesses and healing purposes, it can be seen that the historical timeline dates back to 2900 B.C. Around 2900 B.C., a Chinese Emperor by the name of Fu Hsi gave Marijuana the title of 'Popular Medicine' (*Historical Timeline – Medical Marijuana – ProCon.Org*). The usage of Marijuana that long ago shows that its medicinal properties were known far and wide and were being used to treat illnesses.

Robert Deitch, who is a hemp activist asserts that the government has ignored the beneficial

properties of Marijuana, and the pharmaceutical companies even though reports have shown that Marijuana is more effective when used for medicinal purposes than other drugs (*Robert Deitch – Medical Marijuana – ProCon.Org*). In addition to this, Marijuana is quite useful for cancer treatment as it reduces the aftereffects of chemotherapy. One common side effect of chemotherapy is that it induces a nauseating feeling, which usually leads to vomiting in the patients. Being overly fatigued and loss of memory is also one of the impacts of chemotherapy. Weight loss is also one of the side effects of chemotherapy as cancer patients feel nauseous and vomit after coming out of the therapy. Therefore, the thought of food can make them feel sick which leads them towards avoid when given anything to eat. The THC chemical present in Marijuana helps in reducing the effect of chemotherapy. It should also be noted while discussing the benefits of Marijuana that the FDA approved this drug for the treatment of cancer patients in the year 1985. Therefore, it becomes evident then that the drug should not be neglected when treating patients who are undergoing chemotherapy.

Due to marijuana being banned in most states, there has been very little research done on the medical use of marijuana. However, Israel and the United States of America have conducted excessive research on the beneficial properties of marijuana. For as long as can be remembered, extracts from marijuana have been used to cure people who have been inflicted with various illnesses. A study was conducted on the effects of the THC chemical that is found in Marijuana, and it was compared to prochlorperazine in patients who were undergoing chemotherapy for cancer. More than 39 patients showed to have benefited from THC than when given prochlorperazine as standard antisemitic therapy (Sallan et al.). People who were above the age range of 20, showed better responses to THC than older patients. Aside from this, cancer patients who had been treated with THC were shown to have an increased appetite than the rest of the patients. Therefore, it is safe to say that Marijuana does not only prevent nausea and vomiting, but it also increases the food intake among cancer patients. The process of chemotherapy is quite painful as it instils fatigue, nausea, vomiting, sleeplessness, loss of appetite, and slow movement. By using THC substance, the patients showed improvement in their behaviour and moods. Not only did they pick up on the food intake process but also became active and the fatigue was shown to have lessened a great deal (Chang et al.).

From the above discussion, it is evident that Marijuana is engrossed in beneficial qualities that are most effective when used for cancer patients. There have been many controversies surrounding the legalization of Marijuana due to the mind-altering effects found in it. However, it is most beneficial when used by cancer patients who undergo chemotherapy. While researchers continue to conduct more studies on the results of marijuana, it should be noted that the controversies surrounding this drug should not be given into as it was approved by the FDA as an effective medicine in 1975. The surveys that have been mentioned in this essay highlighted the fact that the majority of cancer patients had shown positive responses towards the use of THC that was present in marijuana. On the other hand, medicines besides marijuana were not as effective as patients who underwent extreme fatigue after chemotherapy and showed to have lost their appetite along with slow motor movements. Despite the negative stereotypes surrounding the use of marijuana, it should be used for the prevention of nausea and vomiting as it will help cancer patients in getting better.

Works Cited

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