

Treating Depression with Medical Marijuana

For many people, life is tough enough to contend with, without the pandemic adding to the struggle. COVID has made the world seem surreal in many ways. It's created a feeling of fear and isolation, and a sense of being perpetually off balance.

If you're struggling with depression, you're not alone.

[Mental Health America](#) reported depression rates [rose 873%](#) between January and September 2020. MHA has collected data from over 1.5 million people via their [online screening tool](#). Of those who suffered depression, 70% advised loneliness and isolation were a factor.

Medical marijuana can be a safe and effective way to help combat the condition.

Medical Marijuana and Depression

Research has suggested that medical marijuana may help treat depression. Studies at the [University at Buffalo's Research Institute on Addictions \(RIA\)](#) have focused on [endocannabinoids](#), naturally occurring compounds produced in the brain. These compounds are similar to compounds found in marijuana and THC. Endocannabinoids affect our cognition, emotions, and behaviour.

Animal studies have shown that chronic stress reduces endocannabinoid production.

This reduction in endocannabinoids can then lead to depression. The use of cannabidiol or CBD, extracted from marijuana may help. It not only eases symptoms of depression, it does also so without triggering addiction.

At present, there are many promising studies on medical marijuana for depression.

Tools to Complement Your Treatment

If you'd like to use medical marijuana to treat your depression, speak with your doctor. Once you've got a plan in place to treat your condition, there are several things you can do to complement your treatment, such as:

Focus On Your Health:

A healthy body can help support depression treatment. Eating well, getting enough sleep and exercise can balance hormones and help you cope.

Keep it simple; a daily walk, cutting out junk food or alcohol. Little changes over time can make you feel so much better.

Manage Stress:

Stress can make you feel like the whole world is weighing on you, making depression worse. Be sure to find a healthy way to manage your stress.

Whether it's exercise, meditation or talking to someone you trust, be mindful of stress levels.

Keep a Journal:

Journaling is a wonderful way to explore your feelings and feel more positive. Expressing and letting go of sadness, anger or other painful emotions is extremely therapeutic.

Used in conjunction with medical marijuana, journaling can be an insightful tool to help you fight depression.

Connect with Others:

If you're suffering from depression, it's important to know you're not alone. Seek out support groups or resources that can help you connect with others.

It could be a Zoom session with a support group at church, or a program at work. Connecting is vital to healing depression. Especially if you're feeling isolated due to the pandemic.

Possible Side Effects of Medical Marijuana

Studies have shown that medical marijuana has very few side effects. A [2014 study](#) published in the [Hawaii Journal of Medicine & Public Health](#) reported 71% of participants reported no side effects. However, 6% experienced throat irritation and/or cough.

Medical marijuana is considered a safe treatment option, however there are some concerns about cannabis as a cause of depression. Always speak with your doctor before using any treatment options for depression.

For many people suffering from depression, medical marijuana can be a safe and effective treatment option. If you want more information on using medical marijuana to treat depression, talk to your doctor today.