

CBD OIL FOR THE TREATMENT OF AUTISM

Can CBD Oil Help Treat Symptoms of Autism?

Posted on: June 13th, 2019



Cannabis laws are changing rapidly across all 50 states. A majority of states permit marijuana for medicinal use, and currently, 11 states allow it for recreational use. Only a handful of states currently classify marijuana as entirely illegal. In the late part of 2018, we also saw the passing of the 2018 Farm Bill that legalized the growing and cultivation of hemp on the federal level. With loosening laws and negative stigmas pertaining to cannabis slowly starting to fade, medical research into the therapeutic benefits of cannabis is starting to rise. One area in particular that is gaining positive momentum, is using **CBD oil for the treatment of autism.**

WHAT IS CBD?

CBD is one of many cannabinoids found in cannabis. It is non-psychoactive. This means that unlike hemp's cousin marijuana, you cannot get

“high” from taking it. Even [Full Spectrum CBD oil](#) products that contain trace amounts of THC will not get you high, making CBD oil a safe option for children with autism.

CBD is a known anti-inflammatory and can help treat things like [anxiety](#), [pain](#), and [depression](#), but it is most well-known for its effective treatment of seizures. In fact, there is a pharmaceutical-grade CBD product prescribed for seizures on the market called Epidiolex. Outside of that though, there hasn't been enough concrete research and legislation passed to further CBD's therapeutic treatment capabilities to extend to other areas....yet.

HOW DOES CBD WORK?

Our bodies have a network of cannabinoid receptors that plug into our body's [Endocannabinoid System](#). This system is responsible for maintaining a state of well-being within our bodies, also known as homeostasis. It's believed that when our bodies have a cannabinoid imbalance, symptoms start to manifest themselves in negative ways. Taking CBD and other cannabinoids essentially feeds this system, plugging into each other like a lock and key. By adding cannabinoids to our daily intake, our Endocannabinoid System can function optimally to bring our body back into its natural balanced state.

CBD AND AUTISM

It's estimated that autism spectrum disorders affect nearly 1% of children worldwide. In the United

States, it's estimated that around 1 in 59 children have been identified with having Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). ASD includes a wide range of brain disorders, with most making communication and other social interactions very challenging. Even children who are considered to be high-functioning can show a lack of interest in making friends, being in social situations, and understanding social cues. These traits can be difficult to manage for both autistic children and parents of autistic children alike.

Enter cannabis. Specifically CBD rich strains. According to a study of 60 children who were treated with CBD over a 6 month period:

- **61% of patients had significant improvement in behavioral outbreaks**
- **47% had improved communication**
- **39% showed decreased anxiety**
- **33% had a decrease in stress**
- **33% showed a decrease in disruptive behaviors**

Additionally, CBD was deemed as **“well-tolerated, safe and seemingly effective option to relieve symptoms, mainly: seizures, tics, depression, restlessness and rage attacks.”**



PARENTS OF AUTISTIC CHILDREN FACE HURDLES

Even with the findings of this study, one of the problems parents are facing is a general lack of support from the medical community. Currently, there's a shortage of proper training and knowledge of cannabis products and their therapeutic effectiveness. According to [this study](#), physicians in training in the United States felt unprepared to prescribe medical marijuana or answer questions regarding cannabis. The authors also cited that only 9% of US medical schools have clinical cannabis content in their school curriculum. This means that parents of autistic children who are looking for alternative treatment methods are running into walls when trying to address options with their physicians. This leads parents of autistic children to take matters into their own hands.

One mother in Iowa named Lindsay Gaunt, whose daughter Obreigh was diagnosed with non-verbal autism, saw remarkable results after trying CBD. In August 2018, the Gaunt family filed a petition with the Iowa Medical Board to allow the use of CBD for treatment of pediatric autism. In February 2019 the Iowa Board of Medicine voted unanimously to add "severe, intractable pediatric autism with self-injurious or aggressive behavior" to the list of conditions that are treated with CBD. According to Gaunt, **"My nonverbal daughter with severe autism and physically aggressive behavior is talking, playing pretend, singing and engaging."** You can follow Obreigh's progress on her [YouTube Channel](#).

An organization called [MAMMA](#) (Mothers Advocating Medical Marijuana for Autism) is a non-profit group whose goal is to empower parents to advocate for their children with autism. They are committed to changing state laws so that children have access to cannabis under their doctor's guidance.

MORE STUDIES ARE NEEDED

Although there have been success stories in the treatment of autism and CBD, it's important to understand that CBD oil is not the cure-all magic pill that will fix everything. Instead, it should be noted that there is mounting evidence that CBD is a great natural alternative to some of the pharmaceutical components on the market in the treatment of autism. Some parents of autistic children who have been proactive in their children's treatment have had remarkable success with CBD oil. Additionally, CBD (even in high

dosages) is considered safe with no known overdoses. But until more studies are published and the traditional medical community gets on board, CBD oil for the treatment of autism is an option worth pursuing for those who are taking treatment options into their own hands.