

# Can medical marijuana effectively treat childhood epilepsy?

September 9 2021

---



Generalized 3 Hz spike and wave discharges in a child with childhood absence epilepsy. Credit: Wikipedia.

Following media reports of children with epilepsies reportedly deriving benefits from medical marijuana (or cannabis-based medicinal products) accessed abroad, the UK government allowed clinicians to prescribe these products. A review published in *Developmental Medicine & Child Neurology* explores the science behind cannabis-based medicinal products in pediatric epilepsies and highlights areas that warrant additional research.

The authors also examined the prescribing environment surrounding these products. They found that a lack of quality evidence for efficacy and safety is the major obstacle to prescribing.

They stress that unlicensed cannabis-based [medicinal products](#) should not circumvent usual regulatory requirements before being prescribed. And they worry that children with epilepsy are at risk of being used as a "Trojan horse" for the cannabis industry, with widespread acceptance of medicinal cannabis accelerating the wider legalization of marijuana and opening up a highly lucrative commercial market.

**More information:** Martin Kirkpatrick et al, Epilepsy and cannabis: so near, yet so far, *Developmental Medicine & Child Neurology* (2021).  
[DOI: 10.1111/dmcn.15032](https://doi.org/10.1111/dmcn.15032)

Provided by Wiley

Citation: Can medical marijuana effectively treat childhood epilepsy? (2021, September 9) retrieved 5 May 2024 from  
<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-09-medical-marijuana-effectively-childhood-epilepsy.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.
---