

Researchers to highlight cancer patient, survivor survey on cannabis

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As the legalization of medicinal and recreational cannabis becomes more common in localities across the country, so does research on its use and effects. Results of an anonymous cancer patient and survivor survey conducted by a team from Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center's Center for Translational Research on Cannabis and Cancer (CTRCC)

will be shared at the [American Association for Cancer Research 2023 Annual Meeting](#) in Orlando.

In a poster session on Wednesday, April 19, from 9-12:30 EDT, graduate student Michelle Goulette will present the [findings](#) of "Self-reported knowledge of Δ 9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and cannabidiol (CBD) potency in [cannabis products](#) among [cancer patients](#) and survivors: Results from a survey of cannabis consumers at an NCI-designated cancer center."

Optimizing cancer symptom management relies on patients communicating information to their oncology providers. Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and cannabidiol (CBD) levels in cannabis products are important for providers to know about, as these cannabinoids have effects on cancer symptoms. However, because different levels of THC and CBD in cannabis products may pose different risks or benefits in cancer patients, the team wanted to see if those surveyed were aware of cannabinoid levels in products they were using. The researchers asked cancer patients and survivors about their knowledge of the cannabinoids THC and CBD in the cannabis products they usually used.

The majority of patients surveyed (59.7%) reported using products that contained mostly THC instead of those with mostly CBD or a combination of both. Of the whole group, only 27.2% were aware of the strength of THC or CBD in what they consumed, with researchers noting that awareness of THC or CBD levels varied based on method of cannabis use (smoked, vaped, oral), where products were purchased, and where patients received their instructions on how to use cannabis. Finding underscore an important information gap among patients, which is important for providers who communicate with patients about their cannabis use to know about.

"Cannabis use is becoming more common among cancer patients and survivors, who often consume products to alleviate [cancer](#) symptoms and treatment side effects," says the study's senior author, Danielle Smith, Ph.D., MPH, Assistant Professor of Oncology at Roswell Park, and Director of Population and Behavioral Studies for the CTRCC. "At Roswell Park, we recommend that patients have open and honest conversations about cannabis with their medical providers, so that the benefits and risks of cannabis use can be monitored and managed to optimize [cancer treatment](#) and overall patient well-being."

Provided by Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center

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