

Medical cannabis tied to improved health-related quality of life

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Medical cannabis treatment may be associated with improvements in

health-related quality of life for patients with a range of health conditions, according to a case series study published online May 9 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Thomas R. Arkell, Ph.D., from the Swinburne University of Technology in Melbourne, Australia, and colleagues assessed whether [patients](#) using [medical cannabis](#) report improvements in health-related quality of life over time. The analysis included 3,148 patients (mean age, 55.9 years) from [medical clinics](#) across Australia.

The researchers found that chronic noncancer pain was the most common indication for treatment (68.6 percent), followed by cancer pain (6.0 percent), insomnia (4.8 percent), and anxiety (4.2 percent). Patients reported significant improvements from baseline on all eight domains of the 36-Item Short Form Health Survey (SF-36) after starting treatment with medical cannabis.

Over time, these improvements were mostly sustained. Treatment with medical cannabis was associated with an improvement of 6.60 to 18.31 points in SF-36 scores, depending on the domain, in an adjusted analysis; effect sizes ranged from 0.21 to 0.72. Two of 2,919 adverse events were considered serious.

"Adverse events were rarely serious but common, highlighting the need for caution with prescribing medical cannabis," the authors write.

Several authors disclosed financial ties to the pharmaceutical and cannabis industries.

More information: Thomas R. Arkell et al, Assessment of Medical Cannabis and Health-Related Quality of Life, *JAMA Network Open* (2023). [DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2023.12522](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2023.12522)

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