

# New study suggests growing use of cannabis to help manage menopause symptoms

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Not so long ago, young adults were the primary users of cannabis. The reality today, however, is that women and adults aged 50+ represent the fastest growing group of users. A study, presented during the [2023 Annual Meeting of The Menopause Society](#) in Philadelphia September 27–30, confirms the frequent use of cannabis by midlife women to

manage an array of menopause symptoms.

With rapidly expanding legalization and normalization, recreational and [medical cannabis use](#) is increasing across all age groups. Past research largely focused on usage habits by men and younger adults. However, until now, little was known about the prevalence or characteristics of cannabis use among [women](#) in and after the [menopause](#) transition.

A new study based on data from more than 5,000 midlife women has sought to address this information gap by analyzing the frequency, forms, and motives of cannabis use by primarily postmenopausal women.

Based on the results, the researchers concluded that cannabis use is relatively common in midlife women. Over 40% reported ever using cannabis for recreational or therapeutic purposes, most often to treat chronic pain (28%), anxiety (24%), sleep problems (22%), and stress (22%). Women who reported using cannabis specifically for menopause symptoms (6%) primarily reported targeting menopause-related mood and sleep difficulties.

More than 10% of study participants had used cannabis in the past 30 days, most often smoking (56%), ingesting edible products (52%), or using cannabis in more than one form (39%). Among those with past 30-day use, 31% reported smoking cannabis on a daily or near-daily basis, while 19% reported daily or near-daily use of edible cannabis products.

Study results presented at meeting are in an abstract presentation titled "Medical and Recreational Cannabis Use in the Menopause Transition: Evaluation of Trends from a Large, Nationally Representative Sample of Midlife Women."

"We know that cannabis products are being marketed to women to manage menopause symptoms, and these findings suggest that midlife women are turning to cannabis for menopause symptoms and other common issues in the [menopause transition](#). But we still do not know if use is actually helping for those symptoms, or if it may be contributing to other challenges," says Dr. Carolyn Gibson, lead author and health services researcher at the University of California, San Francisco.

"These findings highlight the need for recognizing and discussing cannabis use in the health care setting," says Dr. Stephanie Faubion, medical director for The Menopause Society. "Additional research is needed to evaluate the potential harms and/or benefits of use."

Provided by The North American Menopause Society

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