

Can medical marijuana help treat intractable epilepsy?

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A new *British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology* review examines the potential of medicinal cannabis—or medical marijuana—for helping patients with intractable epilepsy, in which seizures fail to come under control with standard anticonvulsant treatment.

The authors note that cannabidiol—the most researched compound of cannabis—may have modest efficacy and be appropriate for children with severe epilepsy, but attention must be paid to potential side effects and [drug interactions](#). There is no evidence to guide physicians in ranking cannabidiol among current antiepileptic drugs, and it will be important to continue studying its potential through rigorous clinical trials.

"The emergence over the past 12 months of the first successful double-blind [randomized controlled trials](#) of cannabidiol is good news for some desperate families of children with severe epilepsy. These studies are a reminder though that this drug is no miracle, and we still have much to learn," said co-author Dr. John Anthony Lawson, of Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick, in Australia.

More information: John A. Lawson et al, Therapeutic Use of medicinal cannabis in difficult to manage epilepsy, *British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology* (2018). [DOI: 10.1111/bcp.13711](https://doi.org/10.1111/bcp.13711)

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