Legalization of medical marijuana beneficial for cancer patients
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The researchers found that medical marijuana legalization was associated with a reduction in the rate of one or more opioid days among patients with breast cancer with recent opioids, with colorectal cancer with recent opioids, and with lung cancer without recent opioids (difference, 5.6, 4.9, and 6.5 percentage points, respectively). Among patients with lung cancer with recent opioids, legalization of medical marijuana was associated with a reduction in the rate of one or more pain-related hospital events (difference, 6.3 percentage points).

"The findings suggest that medical marijuana could be serving as a substitute for opioids to some extent," the authors write. "Future studies need to elucidate the nature of the associations and their implications for patient outcomes."

One author disclosed financial ties to Sunstone Therapies.


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