ALS and Medical Cannabis

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Research suggests that medical cannabis can deliver notable benefits in treatment for symptoms related to Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS).

Medical Cannabis as Part of an ALS Treatment Plan

ALS treatment is based on managing symptoms such as muscle spasms, loss of appetite, pain, and depression. The one medication that the FDA has approved for the condition extends the amount of time before respiratory muscle failure and has provided positive results for some patients.

Meanwhile, researchers at the University of Washington Medical Center and Pennsylvania's Temple University have reviewed the data on medical cannabis use for ALS management. Although there have been no clinical trials, they note the remarkable effects and benefits of using the drug. The authors of this study wrote: "Preclinical data indicate that cannabis has powerful antioxidative, anti-inflammatory, and neuroprotective effects. Cannabis also has properties applicable to symptom management of ALS, including analgesia, muscle

relaxation, bronchodilation, saliva reduction, appetite stimulation, and sleep induction. … From a pharmacological perspective, cannabis is remarkably safe with realistically no possibility of overdose or frank physical addiction. There is a valid, logical, scientifically grounded rationale to support the use of cannabis in the pharmacological management of ALS.”

Furthermore, researchers note that cannabis is extremely safe pharmacologically because it poses an extremely low risk of physical addiction or overdose. ALS is a condition with few treatment options. There is no cure, and even managing symptoms can be challenging. CITIVA is hopeful that cannabis medicine will become an integral part of the medical arsenal against this disease.

Understanding ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis)

Also known as Lou Gehrig’s disease, ALS is a condition that causes progressive degenerative damage to the nerves in the central nervous system, which is comprised of the spinal cord and brain. Standard motor neuron activity occurs between the central nervous system and the muscles in your body. If you have ALS, your motor neurons degenerate over time, and your central nervous system loses control over your muscles. During the final phases of ALS, some sufferers become totally paralyzed.

Symptoms of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis

Some of the symptoms that are characteristic of ALS include:

- Fasciculation, which is twitching and cramping muscles, especially in the hands and feet
- Leg, arm or hand muscle weakness, or weak muscles that affect speaking, breathing and swallowing
- Difficulty swallowing or breathing and shortness of breath during the final phases of the disease
- Impaired use of the arms and legs
- Thickening of speech and difficulty with voice projection