

What You Didn't Know About CBD Oil & Mental Health

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When it comes to mental health, mental instability is most commonly dealt with through prescriptions to modern pharmaceuticals. For depression, antidepressants and SSRI's are the solutions; panic attacks and anxiety are treated with benzodiazepines, and most instances of psychosis are treated with antipsychotics. But just as each of these mental health issues is often quite a bit more complex than their name suggests, they are often also experienced in association with one another, and on a sliding scale of severity. Traditional methods of treatment, using strong medications, can often lead to unwanted results, and further destabilization in other areas of mental health.

Nowadays, cannabidiol (CBD), is demonstrating increasing potential as a safe, all natural alternative to current pharmaceuticals. Its viability has been proven through extensive qualitative evidence from patients self-medicating their own mental illness, and these anecdotal cases are now being backed up through scientific study. Cannabidiol offers such an exciting alternative to many of the more mainstream treatment options because it has been found to have no known side-effects. Despite the impressive results of CBD, patients never report feeling numb, more depressed, or any increased instability, which are often the cases for patients using traditional medications.

Interaction of CBD with the Endocannabinoid System

The ability of CBD to affect mental illness stems from its influence over the function of the endocannabinoid system. This system manages many important activities within the body, including appetite, mood, pain perception, the immune system, and the nervous system. Throughout the body this system regulates the effect of outside influences on the internal environment and it is constantly aiming to achieve a stable homeostasis. Inside the brain, the endocannabinoid system specifically regulates the release of neurotransmitters, which are the means of communication. Different cannabinoids found in cannabis tend to influence different aspects of this system, but all are able to interact with it because as phytocannabinoids they mimic the endocannabinoids produced naturally.

Depending on location, a dysfunction of neurotransmission could lead to mental health issues, for example, a change in serotonin production or absorption. Cannabidiol is able to effectively influence the healthy functioning of the communications network within the brain. This means there is great potential for CBD as a treatment for mental illness.

The research into CBD oil as an alternative therapy for many mental health issues is extremely compelling and warrants a new focus for mental health experts to pursue it as a solution to the mental health crisis currently facing the developed world. The main areas of focus are explored below, including CBD oil for anxiety, depression, addictions, and schizophrenia.

Anxiety and Panic Attacks

Although THC and CBD stem from the same cannabis plant, CBD works remarkably well as a counterbalance to the sometimes psychotic characteristics of THC. THC is able to directly lock with CB-1 receptors, but when CBD is present it essentially unlocks this interaction, making the high from THC much less powerful. So just as THC causes anxiety for many people, CBD offers a natural solution. In one of the most often cited studies, researchers from Sao Paulo Brazil determined that CBD was able to reduce the strength and duration of anxiety prior to public speaking. This was measured using visual, self-reported, and physiological indicators.

Depression and Bipolar

High CBD strains, or hemp derived CBD oil, have also been found to be extremely beneficial as mood stabilizers. This has been pursued by many people because one of the more common prescriptions for bipolar disorder, "Lamictal" (Lamotragine), is actually an anti-seizure medication. Since CBD has been well proven to reduce or altogether eliminate seizures, people naturally began to experiment. It was found that CBD had mood stabilizing

capabilities extremely similar to Lamictal. In story after story, desperate family members have turned to CBD to help treat their loved ones who suffer from depression or bipolar disorders. A common thread has emerged in these stories, showing that after a two to three week treatment period, family members begin to notice a noticeable improvement. The edge and irritability is gone, the patients are sleeping better, and in a much more stable mood.

Addiction Treatment

Addiction is a mental illness like all the others on this list. It is extremely difficult to treat, and many addicts suffer a series of relapses throughout their recovery program. In some of the most recent explorations of CBD and addiction treatment, there is a strong indication that CBD could offer a viable option for opioid addictions. One study found that CBD was able to reduce the reward facilitating effects of morphine. The reason why opioids are so problematic is because they create a subconscious feedback loop, in a constant quest for the user to feel the same rush again and again. However, when this loop is interrupted, and the drugs are blocked from creating this association, the addiction may be able to be better managed.

Schizophrenia and Psychosis

Just as CBD has been found to balance out the anxiety and psychosis triggered by THC, there is speculation that CBD could also be used to treat other instances of psychosis as well. This potential is being explored through many small-scale clinical studies, and the preliminary results are strongly suggesting CBD as an effective alternative antipsychotic medicine. In one study, schizophrenic participants were given 600mg daily doses of CBD. After six weeks of treatment, they were found to have increased attention span (reduced attention is linked to schizophrenia). Another study found that CBD therapy improved the ability to normally process auditory stimulation, which can be inhibited during psychosis.