

American Epilepsy Society Just Confirmed CBD Stops Epileptic Seizures

By: Stephen Calabria

A study recently unveiled by the American Epilepsy Society (AES) confirms CBD is effective in combating epilepsy – and totally contradicts the DEA.

A study recently unveiled by the American Epilepsy Society (AES) has found a cannabis derivative to be effective in combating epilepsy, with the substance exhibiting acute efficacy in treating the condition within children.

The American Epilepsy Society's findings

The study – titled “Efficacy and Safety of Epidiolex (Cannabidiol) in Children and Young Adults With Treatment-Resistant Epilepsy” – was unveiled at the AES’s 70th annual meeting last month.

The study found that cannabidiol (CBD) was effective in reducing both the frequency and severity of seizures in both children and adults. It began in Philadelphia in 2014 with children from epilepsy treatment centers nationwide.

Specifically, patients who received the treatment were found to have exhibited a median reduction in seizures of 45.1 percent.

The study was unequivocal in its findings,

These results from an uncontrolled study support the animal studies and prior reports showing that CBD may be a promising treatment for [treatment-resistant epilepsies] and it is generally well-tolerated in doses up to 25mg/kg/day.

According to Dr. Orrin Devinsky, a lead author of the study and neurologist at the New York University Langone Medical Center, the findings were highly promising.

In the subsequent periods, which are very encouraging, 9 percent of all patients and 13 percent of those with Dravet Syndrome epilepsy were seizure-free.

Many have never been seizure-free before.

The leaders of the study have been outspoken about its findings, stressing that it is amongst the larger body of research to suggest that cannabis and its derivatives are effective in combating epileptic seizures.

Elizabeth A. Thiele, M.D., Ph.D. – a lead author of the study – said in an AES press releasethat the study's findings could provide hope to numerous epilepsy patients,

For many children with treatment-resistant Dravet syndrome, Lennox-Gastaut syndrome and other epilepsies, CBD appears to be an effective – sometimes extremely effective – treatment that is safe and well-tolerated overall.

Thiele was quick to point out, however, that patients and observers should work to manage their expectations,

It is not a silver bullet, but there are children who benefit from this more than they have from other treatments.

Concerns over self-treatment

Despite the promise shown by the efficacy of cannabis in treating epilepsy, physicians have nonetheless cautioned against patients – and especially patients' parents – attempting to procure and prescribe the substance on their own.

This phenomenon is challenging, says Nicole Hansen, the mother of a seven-year-old boy with epilepsy, since a lack of physician input may often lead to imprecise dosages for the patient.

You have to make sure the company can replicate the same product over and over. A small change in the ratio of THC to cannabidiol can cause a child's seizures to increase or come back.

Some parents, however, have no choice: Many of those with children whose epileptic conditions have been found to be treatable with CBD oil live in states in which the substance is forbidden, forcing them to obtain the medicine through back channels.