Cannabinoids Show Long-Term Benefits for MS Patients, Study Says

Unknown reporter; NORML eZine, 8(42); 2005-11-23
[Id: http://www.doctordeluca.com/Library/WOD/WPS3-MedMj/CannabinoidsLongTermBenefitMS05.htm]
[Related resources: http://www.doctordeluca.com/Library/LibPages/WODjournalism-lib.htm]

See also:
Marijuana and MS; D. Goodin; The Lancet Neurology; 3(2); pages 79-80; 2004-02
War on Pain Sufferers #3: Medical Marijuana, 2000-2005

Plymouth, United Kingdom: Long-term administration of oral THC and/or natural cannabis extracts reduces MS-associated pain and improves mobility compared to placebo, according to clinical trial data to be published in the *Journal of Neurology, Neurosurgery, and Psychiatry*. [Full text of the study "Cannabinoids in multiple sclerosis study: safety and efficacy data for 12 months follow up," will appear in the December 2005 issue of the *Journal of Neurology, Neurosurgery, and Psychiatry.*]

The findings are based on the results of a 52-week follow-up trial of more than 500 multiple sclerosis patients. Results of the initial fifteen-week, double-blind, placebo controlled trial, appeared in the British medical journal *The Lancet*, Vol. 362, in 2003 [by Zajicek, et al.]

[Oral Administration Of Cannabinoids Alleviates MS Symptoms, Large Scale Study Says; NORML News; 2003-11-13]

Although investigators only found evidence of a "small treatment effect" in the control of patients' spasticity, they noted that subjects achieved greater symptomatic relief in other areas - including pain relief, sleep quality, and mobility - the longer they used cannabinoids. These results "suggest [a] wider symptomatic benefit with time," researchers concluded.

British researchers are expected to begin recruiting patients this spring to participate in a three-year clinical trial to further investigate whether the long-term use of cannabinoids alters the progression of MS.

Previous studies investigating the impact of cannabinoids on animal models of MS [Pot Inhibits Neurodegeneration In Animal Model Of MS; NORML News; 2003-11-30], Parkinson's disease [Cannabinoids Treat Pain, Protect Brain Cells And Delay Neurodegenerative Disease Progression; NORML News; 2004-11-04], and Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis [THC Delays Progression Of Lou Gehrig's Disease; NORML News; 2004-06-24] have found that the compounds inhibited the diseases' progression.

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