



Information for Iowa Patients about the Therapeutic Use of Medical Cannabidiol

What is Cannabidiol?

Cannabidiol (CBD) is the name of one type of cannabinoid found in the cannabis plant family. Hemp and marijuana are plants in this family. In Iowa's medical cannabidiol program, the definition of "cannabidiol" means CBD as well as any other cannabinoid that meets the program's requirements.

What is a Cannabinoid?

A cannabinoid is a class of chemical compounds that occurs naturally in plants and animals. There are more than 100 different naturally occurring cannabinoids.

Are Cannabidiol and other Cannabinoids considered Marijuana?

Until recently, the most well-known compound in cannabis was tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). This is the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana. Marijuana also contains other cannabinoids, including CBD.

THC is well-known for the mind-altering "high" it produces when broken down by heat and introduced to the body, such as when smoking the plant or cooking it into foods.

CBD and other cannabinoids are not psychoactive. This means they do not change the state of mind of the person who uses them. However, cannabinoids do appear to produce significant changes in the body, and may have medical benefits.

How do Cannabidiol and other Cannabinoids Work?

CBD and other cannabinoids attach themselves to certain receptors in the body to produce their effects.

The human body produces certain cannabinoids on its own, and has two receptors, called CB1 and CB2 receptors.

CB1 receptors are found all around the body, but many of them are in the brain.

In general, the CB1 receptors in the brain deal with coordination and movement, pain, emotions and mood, thinking, appetite, and memories. THC attaches to these receptors.

CB2 receptors are more common in the immune system. They have an effect on inflammation and pain.

It used to be thought that CBD acts on these CB2 receptors, but it appears now that cannabinoids do not act on either receptor directly. Instead, they seem to influence the body to use more of its own cannabinoids.

Potential Health Benefits

Because of the way CBD and other cannabinoids act in the body, they may have some potential health uses. Certain research (including both cell culture and animal models) has shown cannabinoids to have a range of effects that may be therapeutically useful, including anti-seizure, antioxidant, neuroprotective, anti-inflammatory, analgesic, anti-tumor, anti-psychotic, and anti-anxiety properties.

How are Cannabidiol and other Cannabinoids Used?

CBD and other cannabinoids are taken orally, rubbed on the skin as a cream or an oil, and sometimes inhaled through vapor or used intravenously to produce their effects.

Potential Side Effects and Health Risks

Small-scale studies that have looked into the safety of CBD and other cannabinoids in adults have found that they are generally well tolerated across a wide range of doses. But because there are so many cannabinoids, not all have been well studied at this time.

There have been no known findings of significant central nervous system side effects, or effects on vital signs or mood among people who use CBD sparingly or more heavily.

The most common side effects of CBD noted are:

- fatigue/tiredness
- diarrhea
- changes in appetite or weight
- dry mouth
- low blood pressure

Pregnancy and breast-feeding: There is not enough reliable information about the safety of taking CBD or other cannabinoids if you are pregnant or breast feeding.

Parkinson's disease: Some early research suggests that taking high doses of CBD might make muscle movement and tremors worse in people with Parkinson's disease.

***As with any new or alternative treatment option,
a patient should discuss the potential health benefits, side effects, and risks of CBD and other
cannabinoids with a qualified healthcare practitioner before using them.***

References:

WebMD

Medical News Today: 2017

Dr. Nora Volkow (NIDA): 2015