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Treating the Spectrum of Mood Disorders



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Depression, Anxiety, PTSD Outline

- Symptoms + treatment
- Cannabinoid medicine versus conventional treatment
- Clinical research
- Factors influencing endocannabinoid deficiency





Depression: Symptoms + Treatment

- Hopelessness, frustration, anxiety, poor sleep, anxiety + more
- Medications that modulate neurotransmitters
 - SSRIs, or selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (ie: Prozac, Zoloft)
 - SNRIs, or serotonin norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (ie: Wellbutrin)
- Endocannabinoids regulate presynaptic release of neurotransmitters
 - Cannabinoid treatment may help regulate constituents contributing to depression





Links to Depression

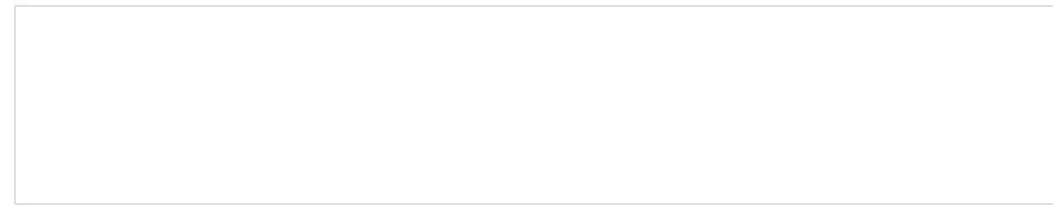
- Cannabis use + depression are often co-morbid
- Women more prone to depression + ECS deficiency
 - Related to fluctuating estrogen levels
- Associated genetic links for cannabinoid receptors + depression
- Genetic mutations in enzyme FAAH may cause abnormally low or high levels of anandamide





Cannabinoid Medicine for Depression

- Fewer side effects, no overdose risk
- Sativa by day to foster energy
- Indica by night to slow negative thoughts
- Cultivars (aka: strains) rich in beta-caryophyllene activate CB2 receptors to manage anxiety





Possible Interactions

- Avoid CBD if taking meds contraindicated with grapefruit (to avoid increasing drug absorption)
- CBD + Zoloft can lead to nausea, mood swings, agitation
- CBD + antidepressant Effexor XR can reduce medication effectiveness





Anxiety: Symptoms + Treatment

- Several types: general, panic, separation, social, phobias, restlessness, worrying, lack of concentration, poor sleep, GI issues
- Similar treatment as depression
- ECS deficiency due to chronic stress → receptors incapable of handling any stressors
- May be genetic mutation link between ECS system + anxiety





CBD Doses for Stress

- High CBD doses – 300-600 mg – useful for acute, high stress episodes
- Daily low doses – 5-25mg – useful to manage chronic stress





Potential Risks

- Avoid CBD if taking meds contraindicated with grapefruit (to avoid increasing drug absorption)
- CBD + Zoloft can lead to nausea, mood swings, agitation
- CBD may induce short-term memory loss
 - Can counteract with caffeine





PTSD Landscape

- PTSD is response to chronic or acute stress (higher in women)
- Intrusive memories, aggressive behavior, negative mood, avoiding traumatic event
- Antidepressants + sleep aids are effective





Endocannabinoid System + PTSD

- Low levels of blood anandamide + increased CB1 receptors compensate for anandamide deficiency
- Increased CB1 receptors in amygdala correlates with perceived threat
- Genetic make-up may determine response to specific PTSD treatment





What Does the Research Show

- Sleep disturbance can exacerbate + be main symptom of PTSD
- Marinol, Nabilone (synthetic THC) or micro-doses of THC can improve sleep quality + reduce nightmares
- THC can induce psychosis in PTSD
 - Use 1, 2, or 5 mg sparingly for sleep (start low)





Treating PTSD with Cannabis

- Use edibles or tinctures with 1-2.5 mg THC before bedtime
- Some patients may have hangover effect of THC in morning
 - To avoid, take THC earlier in evening
 - Maximum 5 mg dosage
 - Use cultivars with CBD





Potential Risk

- Avoid CBD if taking meds contraindicated with grapefruit (to avoid decreasing drug absorption)
- Substance abuse patients using methadone should not use CBD
- THC only products (Marinol, Nabilone) may be more appropriate to avoid drug interaction





Cannabinoid Hyperemesis

- Syndrome caused by long-term, excessive cannabis use
- Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain
 - Relieved by hot showers + baths
- Often misdiagnosed + misunderstood
- Dysregulation of endocannabinoid system





ECS + Mood Disorders Recap

- Boosting ECS function will help with mood disorders
- Genetics, lifestyle, trauma contribute to ECS deficiency
- Depression, PTSD + anxiety are related to ECS deficiency





Cannabis Research + Mood Disorders Recap

- Gene mutation may contribute to ECS deficiency + influence response to treatment
- Lack of clinical trials due to Schedule 1 status of cannabis
- Little risk of overdose
- May replace pharmaceuticals as firstline therapy





Application for Mood Disorders Recap

- Strains with CBD can relieve symptoms of anxiety + depression plus improve sleep
- High-dose CBD can be tolerated without inducing anxiety or psychosis
- Daily low-dose CBD can manage anxiety, depression + improve sleep
- PTSD patients should use CBD + THC cultivars





Potential Risk Recap

- No cannabis use with Effexor XR
 - Makes antidepressant less effective
 - Increases risk of cannabis use disorder
- Avoid CBD if taking meds contraindicated with grapefruit (to avoid increasing drug absorption)
- Consult with MD to determine if meds can be tapered to avoid any CBD conflict

