

## Health benefits of marijuana

Whether you are for or against medical marijuana there are many documented health benefits that cannot be denied.

Glaucoma is an eye disease which increases pressure in the eyeball, damaging the optic nerve and causing loss of vision. Research shows marijuana decreases the pressure inside the eye and may slow the progression, preventing blindness.

It can help control epileptic seizures and decreases the symptoms of severe seizure disorder such as Dravet's Syndrome.

In chemical research, it was found that marijuana stopped cancer cells from spreading. Studies in the US, Spain and Israel suggest the compounds in cannabis can possibly even kill cancer cells. However most of these studies have been done in labs and not on cancer patients. It has also been know for helping patients being treated with chemotherapy by helping to alleviate the pain, nausea while stimulating appetite.

Medical marijuana may be able to slow the progression of Alzheimer disease by slowing the formation of the enzyme in the brain that kill brain cells that cause the disease.

The drug eases the pain of multiple sclerosis by helping with the painful contractions in muscles and also help with muscle spasms. Studies suggest that marijuana can help with inflammatory bowel diseases like Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis by helping the intestinal cells to bond together tighter therefore preventing the bacteria getting in.

Researchers announced in 2011 that marijuana alleviates pain, reduces inflammation and promotes sleep which may help relieve pain and discomfort for people with rheumatoid arthritis.

Recent research shows that marijuana significantly reduces pain and tremors and improves sleep for people who suffer from Parkinson's disease. It has also to improve fine motor skills among Parkinson's patients as well.

Both laboratory and clinical data has shown that marijuana has incredibly powerful neuroprotective properties that can help protect the brain from damage caused by a stroke, or help to heal the brain after a concussion.

There are many other documented benefits of medical marijuana and with the legalization of medical marijuana already in 20 states in the USA and three of those states already decriminalizing recreational use it is slowly becoming know more for its medicinal uses then as a hippy drug from the 70's.

**By Michelle Austen**