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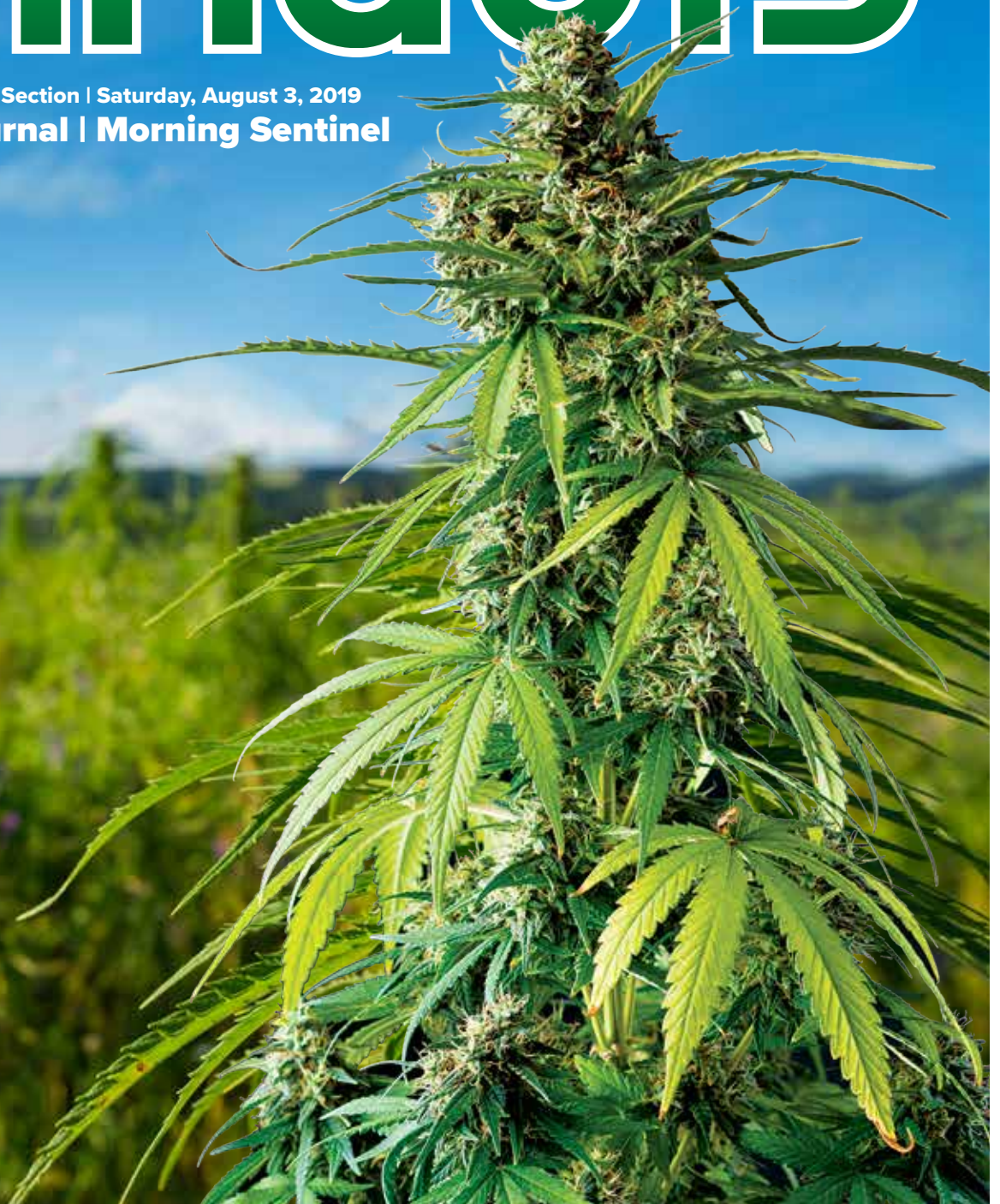
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What you need to know**

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About Using CBD Oil
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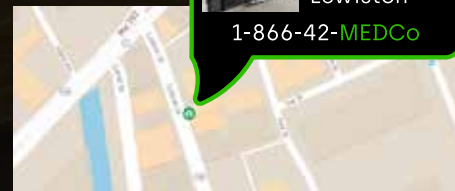
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Decision time: Towns wield outsize influence over Maine's marijuana industry

BY JENNY JOHNSON

Special to Cannabis Connection

In the still murky legal landscape surrounding cannabis, one area is becoming crystal clear: municipalities wield an outsize influence over the fast-growing industry that overshadows even the role of the state.

Cities and towns hold the fate of medicinal and recreational marijuana business in Maine in their hands, because they decided whether to allow the industry to operate in the first place, and once in, where and under what conditions they can operate. They are making critical decisions right now in council and subcommittee meetings all over the state, and the industry is watching with nervous expectation.

One of the key elements in the municipalities' decision-making over whether or not to allow medical and/or adult use cannabis is that they are not getting to keep any of the tax revenue generated by the businesses. It's all going to the state.

The decision to cut off municipalities from any tax revenue from marijuana businesses was "one of the biggest mistakes the state made," said Catherine Lewis, a medical marijuana caregiver and director of Medical Marijuana Caregivers of Maine, a trade association that helped write some of Maine's laws governing the industry. "We wanted to give municipalities a clear direction, but now they are over-controlling."

Some municipalities are charging very high licensing fees, upwards of \$8,000 in some cases, to cover administration fees and, some say, make up for the lack of tax revenue from the businesses.

"It's perceived that people in the cannabis business are making a lot of money, but they are not looking at the expenses. We have staffing and other regular business expenses, plus the large add-on costs of insurance and leases that are increased for cannabis businesses. Plus licensing fees," Lewis said.

There is a point where licensing fees can become illegal, according to Kristin Collins, counsel at Preti Flaherty, who is working with some municipalities to create ordinances for medicinal and adult use marijuana.

"I think that the industry is probably going to be willing to take a certain amount of license fee just to be allowed in a particular town, if that's the thing that lets your town accept you as an industry and feel comfortable," Collins said, speaking at an industry workshop April 10. "But there is a point here where a licensing fee can get illegal, because it's too high; it's too much of a tax."

"We would love to have the extra tax revenue. I mean, I don't think there's any community out there that wouldn't. It would help," said Lisbon Town Manager Diane Barnes. "I'm not sure why the state hasn't done that. It's really a mystery, because the state's not really doing anything. Whatever happens good, bad, or indifferent, it's happening in the community where [the stores] are located."

Municipalities have a range of approaches to using their broad authority to regulate caregivers and production, including where marijuana businesses can operate and how they can operate in terms of parking, odor controls, security, signage and more. Towns must "opt-in" to both medical and recreational marijuana, and doing nothing means the

town has opted out. To opt in, a town must create zoning regulations and/or licensing ordinances for marijuana businesses.

Towns will be able to officially opt in to adult use marijuana once the state approves its rules, which could come later this year. Some, like South Portland, Poland and Waterville, already have adult use ordinances in place that will become active, once the state rules are approved.

"Everyone is doing it differently. Each of the 400-something municipalities will be doing their own, Collins said. "The thing about marijuana is it is an inherently local determination of what that community feels is appropriate at a given time, and that might be different from what they feel is appropriate in another two years."

The directions municipalities move will have major impacts on businesses that by some counts are part of the fastest growing industry in the country.

Currently, 34 states have legalized the use of medical cannabis, and the industry supports 211,000 full time jobs nationwide. There are now more legal cannabis industry workers than dental hygienists in the United States, according to a March 2019 special report on the industry from Leafly and Whitney Economics. Separate research and statistics are needed, because the federal government doesn't count what the report calls "America's hidden job boom."

There is a tension between the sides of medical and adult use marijuana, because medical caregivers see the newer addition of recreational as making towns nervous all over again.

"I'm afraid that municipalities are going to regulate the caregivers out of business," Lewis said. "Passage of adult use made municipalities afraid that cannabis would now be at such a bigger scale, attracting big business. They don't want the weed marts in the small communities, and we understand that."

At the same time, recreational has the potential to be an important addition to medical marijuana and be another way the industry can grow and bring jobs to people in the state, according to Lewis.

"With so many of our other industries – our fishing, our textiles, our shoes, our paper – it's all gone to other places. This is something that Maine can hold on to and have as an industry for itself and for its people, for employment and other incomes," Lewis said. "Right now you have anywhere from 2,500 to 3,500 caregivers, who are independent business owners, supporting themselves with this industry, not relying on state aid."

A trend so far is that towns are opting in by creating rules for medicinal marijuana businesses but not for recreational. That's a mistake that could lead to a prosperous black market, many marijuana supporters say.

"When towns prohibit adult use, they are not functionally prohibiting sales of marijuana," said David Boyer, Maine political director of the Marijuana Policy Project. Boyer is hoping to see a free market that has as few barriers to entry as possible.

While the industry is booming, Maine has likely seen just the beginning of storefronts for marijuana businesses. Some municipalities might move to artificially limit their number, but that may be misguided at this early stage,



some say.

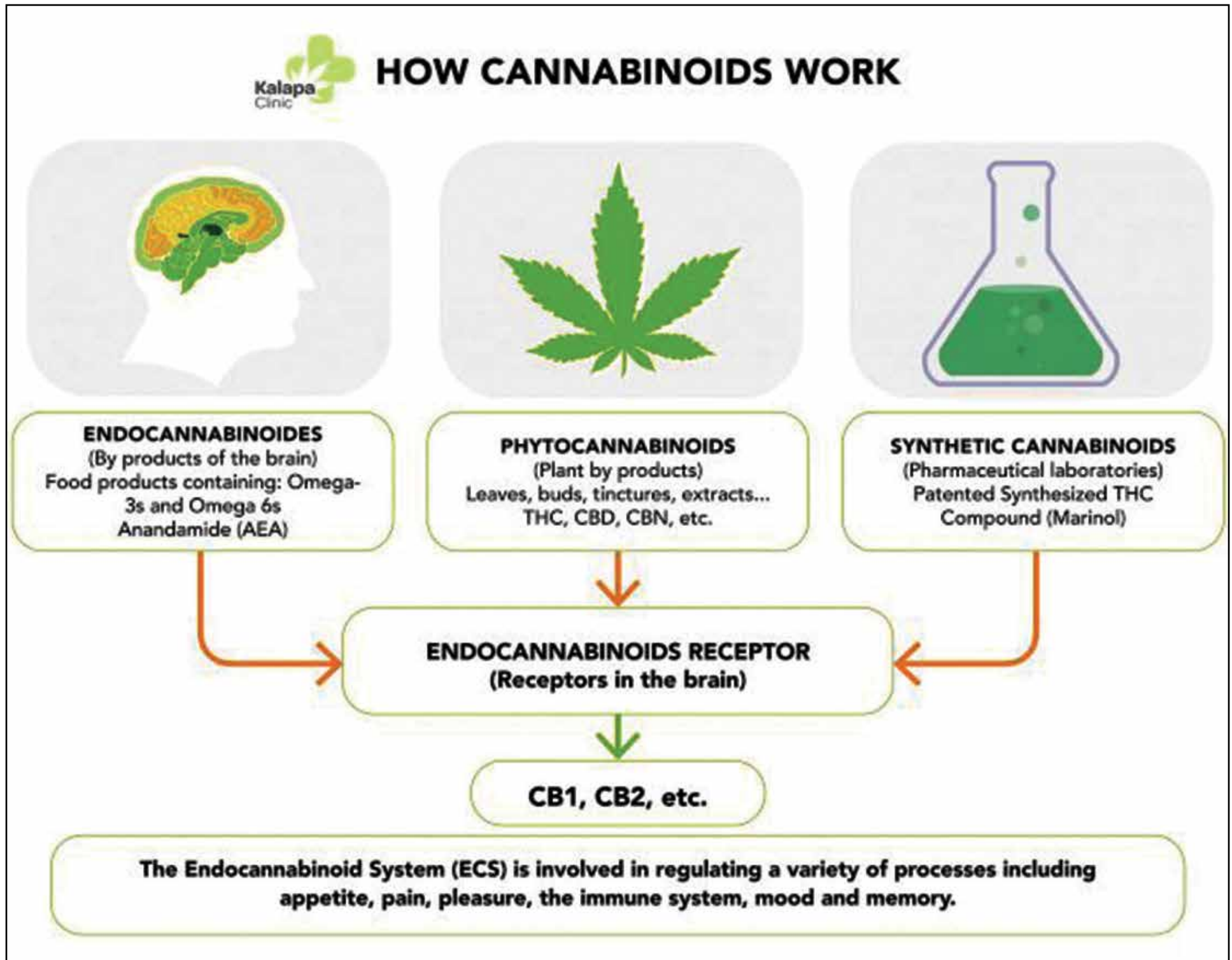
"To me it's just any other business. We're open for business here in Lisbon, and we don't treat that any different than any other business," said Barnes, Lisbon's town manager. "We don't put a cap on gas stations. We don't put a cap on hairdressers. You know, the market is going to dictate for itself. It will either be there for more businesses to open, or it won't."

Being treated like any other business is exactly what many cannabis entrepreneurs are asking for, given that marijuana is a legal business in Maine. But it's up to the municipalities to decide.

What is medical marijuana?

- The term “medical marijuana” refers to treating symptoms of illness and other conditions with the whole, unprocessed marijuana plant or its basic extracts.
- The FDA has not recognized or approved the marijuana plant as medicine.
- However, scientific study of the chemicals in marijuana called “cannabinoids” has led to two FDA-approved medications in pill form, dronabinol and nabilone, used to treat nausea and boost appetite.
- Cannabinoids are chemicals related to THC, marijuana’s main mind-altering ingredient.
- Currently, the two main cannabinoids from the marijuana plant that are of interest for medical treatment are THC and cannabidiol (CBD).
- The body also produces its own cannabinoid chemicals.
- Scientists are conducting preclinical and clinical trials with marijuana and its extracts to treat symptoms of Willness and other conditions.

– NIH National Institute on Drug Abuse





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The “ABCs” of Cannabis Strains

Are you old enough to remember the name Acapulco Gold from back in the days of peace, love and hippies? Cannabis is viewed by a growing number of adults as a natural medicine that can help relieve a variety of symptoms caused by diseases and injuries. Many Mainers who have used cannabis in the past are now able to legally cultivate it for themselves.

But for successful cultivation, a lesson in the science behind the various cannabis strains is very helpful.

Perhaps you’ve been hearing or reading about today’s marijuana names – names like Afghan Kush ... Blue Dream ... and Choo Choo. In fact, there are dozens and dozens of names currently in use. But there is more to know about pot than just a wide variety of catchy names. The strains that are being used medicinally by today’s adults (because teenage use has actually been steadily declining) are categorized as sativa, indica or hybrid.

Indica strains tend to provide stress relief and relaxation, with some stronger varieties used to aid in sleeping. Sativa strains can be helpful in increasing energy levels and also provide an uplifting effect – plus they are also good for pain relief. Hybrid strains can



provide the qualities of sativa and indica, with an emphasis on one or the other.

Laboratory testing can be used to determine which strains contain medically useful amounts of CBD (cannabidiol). Reviews from medical marijuana users also provide data regarding which strains might work best for providing relief from their particular ailments. Strains are documented by history, genetic background, aroma, flavor and

appearance.

Many users eagerly look forward to experimenting with new strains. One of the more popular ones available in Maine is named after the state’s emblematic fruit, the antioxidant-rich (and tasty) blueberry. Another popular strain is called Tangerine Dream, which appeals to lovers of this particular variety of citrus and works very well in providing a boost of energy and relieving muscle

pain. OG Kush is a strain that is frequently used by those seeking relief from depression, nausea and migraine headaches.

These new strains, with their variety of pungent, sweet, and spicy fragrances, represent a big change from the classic “skunky” aroma that many might be familiar with. And their effects have been fine-tuned, as well, with some strains being extremely potent while others provide much milder effects.

This is why the advice and guidance of a medical marijuana caregiver can be so helpful. It’s also important to know where your plants come from, what chemicals may have been used in growing them, and what you can expect to experience as a result of using them – in whatever form you plan to ingest them. Edibles, which have been rapidly growing in popularity, can deliver faster and more potent results than, say, smoking a joint or a bowl.

Individual physiology also plays a big role in how an individual will respond to any of today’s strains. The more we are able to learn about ABCS – along with the pros and cons – of the strains used for both medicinal and recreational cannabis use, the better results we can expect to achieve.



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Medical cannabis helps veteran keep going

BY JENNY JOHNSON

Special to Cannabis Connection

Cannabis is helping a man who spent his career serving our country manage pain and anxiety without addictive pharmaceuticals, and he says he could not live without access to the medicine.

Richard Bryant is a retired senior chief petty officer from the U.S. Navy, who worked mainly in submarines traveling through war zones and around the world over the course of 22 years. He is a native of Poland, Maine.

Bryant lost a leg due to complications from a severe injury and various surgeries and suffers from a number of painful physical ailments, in addition to post traumatic stress disorder.

"I'm hanging in there," Bryant said. "But the marijuana is a Godsend. That's all I can say. It's a fabulous medical thing that shouldn't be ignored. I think more veterans should be on it."

"Some people can deal with it all on their own, but I guarantee you they're taking Vicodin or Oxycodone – one of those addicting drugs," Bryant said.

The Veterans Administration is aware Bryant medicates with marijuana and supports him nonetheless, but it refuses to prescribe him any pain relief or other pharmaceuticals because of that. That can be a problem after a surgery or injury, when severe pain would be better dealt with using a prescription rather than cannabis.

"It should be my choice," Bryant said. "I fell on the stairs, and my whole side was bruised. I popped my shoulder out of joint. I couldn't move. Marijuana didn't even touch that."

But Bryant said he prefers the cannabis anyway, because it's nonaddictive.

"You got to think, a dude like me, if he didn't have medical marijuana and was taking Vicodin every day, he'd be destroyed, suicidal," Bryant said.

Bryant was administered Oxycodone in a nursing home after one of his surgeries. Then, one day, he stopped. I said, 'No more.' I started taking marijuana capsules, and I had no problems. No withdrawals, everything was smooth. That's how I weaned myself off those drugs."

Bryant does not get any financial assistance with purchasing medical marijuana. "It comes out of my pocket, and it's very expensive," Bryant said. "But it's worth it. It's what keeps me going."



"I'm hanging in there. But the marijuana is a Godsend.

That's all I can say. It's a fabulous medical thing that shouldn't be ignored. I think more veterans should be on it."

RICHARD BRYANT

Photography by Katya Danilova



Key things to know about using CBD Oil for pets

Understanding the beneficial properties of CBD (which stands for cannabidiol) means understanding that it does not contain THC, the psychoactive component of marijuana. So know that the CBD products that are intended for use in pain management and healing are not going to cause either humans or their pets to “get high.”

Then what exactly are the benefits produced by the holistic use of these products, particularly for your pets? Well, the researchers who have been studying this topic are have identified some of the key benefits they've discovered – and pet owners who are dedicated to their furry friends' wellness will surely want to be aware of them.

So here are some of the key things you should know about the benefits of using CBD oil for your pet's health – and many, if not all, of these benefits have also been shown to apply to humans, as well.

CBD can be used to treat epilepsy seizures.

Does your dog suffer from epilepsy? It's



estimated that as many as 5% of all dog breeds do – and studies have shown that CBD oil has been effective in treating drug-resistant epilepsy. It is also a safer treatment choice than the drugs that have traditionally been used for epilepsy seizures, such as potassium bromide and phenobarbital, which can cause damage to the liver and other vital organs.

Does your dog have cancer?

The anti-tumor benefits of CBD for

humans with cancer have been shown to extend to canines also. How does CBD do this? By killing some cancer cells and preventing others from growing. It also appears to increase the efficacy of any conventional cancer treatments that are being used.

CBD can be used to reduce anxiety.

Thunderstorms – and fireworks – can send some dogs into a state of panic or anxiety and searching for the nearest bed to crawl under. And many dogs suffer from anxiety when separated from their humans. Studies show that CBD oil, which has been successfully used to treat PTSD symptoms in humans, also reduces the stress and anxiety from which many pets occasionally, or even routinely, suffer.

The pain relief properties of CBD oil are very encouraging.

Whether its pain caused by nerve damage, inflammation or disease, CBD has been so successful in relieving pain that researchers are considering adding pharmaceutical CBD products as a new class of drugs.

CBD can help to keep your pet heart-healthy.

It has been shown to have several cardiovascular benefits, including reducing blood pressure, reducing heart rate, dilating the arteries, protecting blood vessels from damage, and reducing damage caused by cardiac arrhythmia.

What if your dog won't eat?

One frustration shared by many pet owners is a sudden or troubling loss of appetite in their pet – but CBD oil can help if this occurs. It can also help relieve any vomiting or nausea that your pet might be experiencing, which was discovered by doctors when treating cancer patients.

The discovery and identification of the therapeutic benefits of CBD oil and products continues to grow, and the public awareness of these benefits is growing right along with it. By taking a little time to learn more about how CBD can benefit your pets, you just might be adding significantly to their quality of life – and yours.

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Using Marijuana Legally in Maine: What You Need to Know

When Maine voters approved a ballot initiative in 2016 allowing the recreational use of marijuana, it did not result in a “free for all” environment where anything goes. Instead, it imposed certain limitations on the growth, possession and use of cannabis, separate from the legal medical marijuana guidelines that had already existed in Maine – and in nearly half of the states in the U.S.

If you plan to grow and/or use marijuana in Maine recreationally, it’s a good idea to find out what is, and what isn’t, allowed by law. Not knowing could land you in legal trouble – and “harsh your mellow.” So why not take a few minutes to get informed and potentially save yourself some unnecessary legal trouble?

Q: Can adults 21 and older legally smoke pot in public?

A: No. Consuming marijuana in public is illegal in Maine and is punishable by a fine. Confine your cannabis use to private property and away from public viewing.

Q: Is it legal for adults to “grow their own” marijuana?

A: Yes. Any adult may legally grow up to six marijuana plants for their own use. However, the plants must be tagged and grown at a private, owner-occupied residence.

Q: Can privately grown cannabis be sold to other Maine adults?

A: No, it cannot be sold – but up to 2.5 ounces can be given away to another adult, as long as no remuneration is involved.

Q: Where can marijuana be legally purchased in Maine?

A: From medical and recreational dispensaries located within the state.

Q: Can marijuana grown or purchased in Maine be legally brought to other states?

A: No, not even to other states (like Colorado and Washington) where marijuana use is also legal. Maine law does not allow for the export of cannabis and doing so could result in prison time.

Q: How much marijuana can be legally purchased at one time in Maine?

A: Up to 2.5 ounces.



Q: What are Maine’s laws in regard to the trafficking of marijuana?

A: As the law currently stands, it is illegal to traffic, sell or distribute marijuana. The punishment for doing so is based on the weight of the marijuana involved.

Penalties may be increased, or aggravated, based on certain conditions, such as furnishing it to a child, trafficking it within 1,000 feet of a school, or having prior convictions.

Q: What is the punishment for possessing larger amounts of marijuana?

A: 2.5 to 8 ounces is a Class E crime that can result in up to six months in jail and a fine up to \$1,000; 8 to 16 ounces is a Class D crime punishable by up to one year in jail and a \$2,000 fine; 1 to 20 pounds is a Class C crime (presumed to be trafficking or furnishing after one pound) penalized by up to five years in prison and a \$5,000 fine; and possession of more than 20 pounds is a Class B crime subject to as much as 10 years in prison and a \$20,000 fine.



Did You Know?

It’s unlikely that second-hand marijuana smoke would give nonsmoking people in a confined space a high from passive exposure or cause them to fail a drug test. Studies have shown that people who don’t use marijuana report only mild effects of the drug from a nearby smoker, under extreme conditions (breathing in lots of marijuana smoke for hours in an enclosed room).

— NIH National Institute on Drug Abuse



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On top of the 20% off Hive gives Veterans everyday, Hive is actively working on other projects geared at Vets! Hive is a donor with the New England Veterans Alliance, and will be hosting Veteran based events in the near future. Hive also made the purchase of a military Humvee in which they work with other cannabis based businesses to provide shuttle rides to Togus VA.

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“I just moved to Augusta and decided to check this place out. Let me just tell you that this place is unlike any other shop I've been to. From Portland to Bangor- this is my favorite. The staff are incredibly friendly and knowledgeable! The quality is top notch and reasonably priced. -Sarahjessica”

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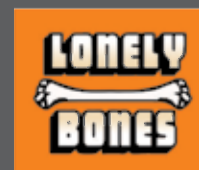
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Legalized marijuana helps veteran with PTSD settle into a more comfortable civilian life

BY TERRI HIBBARD

Special to Cannabis Connection

Ryan Pelletier was something of a mess when he got out of the Marine Corp in 2006.

After serving four years, including one tour in Iraq, he was left with the physical pain of knee problems and overwhelming emotional turmoil.

The transition from military to civilian life was especially tough, he said, because of his training.

“The way they train you is they take all emotions out of you. You’re left with nothing but anger.”

Alcohol gave some relief, but when it became clear he was becoming an alcoholic, “I smartened up a little bit,” he said.

Actually Pelletier, 37, credits the woman in his life with helping him move away from drinking and “dabbling with drugs.”

“And we’re still together,” he said.

As a veteran, he was eligible for care at Togus VA Medical Center in Augusta, where he was diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and given medications.

“They kind of helped with aches and pains . . . kind of shut off your nerves, but not really doing anything. The depression and anti-anxiety pills didn’t work. They made me irritable.”

Exercise brought no relief, either, although he certainly tried that.

“I was a gym freak. I was there six days a week.”

He entered a 12-week program for PTSD that included several sessions a week. But he was still tense, unable to relax, often angry and struggling to sleep.

Then a friend suggested that he try edibles—candies infused with concentrated medical marijuana (or cannabis).

“That helped with the aches and pains. It’s like a muscle relaxant,” said Pelletier.

This was the beginning of a road back to a more comfortable life. He tried different edibles and began legally growing marijuana for his own use, learning about what worked best for him along



Contributed photos:

Above, Ryan relaxing with his dog Colby. Right, Ryan (left) and his brother, Jeremiah at a Marine Corp birthday ball.

the way.

Now, with smoking marijuana in the evening and eating a couple pieces of a potent Hershey-like chocolate bar, Pelletier has almost found peace.

“I laugh again. I’m not so angry. I’m more relaxed and my body feels better.”

He gives great credit to the dispensaries where he buys the edibles for helping him learn about products, potencies and best uses.

“They’re very helpful. They educate you, tell you anything you want to know.”

At this point, Pelletier sees no reason to ever stop relying on using the varieties of marijuana that have given him a decent life.

As a supervisor on a construction job,

“I strive to do my best at work. I never stop thinking about the job. I still struggle to sleep, so it’s nice to relax.”

As he sees it, there are only a couple of downsides to using marijuana.

“If you’re not active, you could gain a little bit of weight when you get the munchies.”

There’s no overdosing on edibles, he points out: “If you eat too much, you just go to sleep.”

The cost is the biggest downside. One of his chocolate bars with 12 sections is

Smoking marijuana and eating a couple pieces of a potent Hershey-like chocolate bar, a Marine diagnosed with PTSD said “I laugh again. I’m not so angry. I’m more relaxed and my body feels better.”

RYAN PELLETIER



\$20. For sleep, he eats two pieces.

Pelletier said his 12-year-old pit bull-Boxer mix, Colby, also likes cannabis.

“He used to moan and groan when he got up off the floor.”

A few drops of very expensive CBD oil in Colby’s food solved that problem.



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Front and center: The effort to normalize CBD

Cannabis is having a moment. This plant - the focus of legal debate, strong emotion and great confusion - currently finds itself front and center in American pop culture, in Congress and in households across the country. Where cannabis is not currently is an even larger issue, as many argue it has life or death consequences.

Cannabis is the plant that produces marijuana - high in THC, or the element that has psycho-tropic effects. The same plant is manufactured to produce CBD, derived from industrial hemp that's low in THC (less than .03 percent) with no psychotropic effects. And yet, the federal government treated both marijuana and hemp as a schedule one drug until late 2018 when Congress passed the Farm Bill. The Farm Bill allows hemp to be grown as an agricultural crop.

Hemp has many uses, but in 2018 a World Health Organization (WHO) report showed that CBD derived from industrial hemp has multiple health benefits, including alleviating PTSD, chronic pain, depression, anxiety, insomnia, seizures and migraines, among others. More importantly, The WHO showed CBD had no addictive impact. Additionally, U.S. patent 6630507 also states the medical benefits of CBD.

"I've lost more friends from suicide since I've been out than I did in combat," said Malachias Gaskin, former Army combat medic. "I want to ask, why would we prescribe medications where some of the side effects are suicide, then question why we lose 22 soldiers a day to suicide?"

Gaskin is one of thousands of veterans who are questioning why the Veterans Administration is not allowed to prescribe CBD derived from industrial hemp as an alternative to addictive opioids. Currently, an estimated 22 veterans per day commit suicide. Suicidal thoughts are a known byproduct of opioids, of which the VA is the largest prescriber in the United States.

"I was on multiple VA-prescribed drugs," said Gaskin. "Due to the issues related to my bursitis, my arm was in a sling when a buddy told me about CBD. I got a bottle of 300 mg. After taking it twice a day for three days, I was back in the gym, lifting my full weight." Gaskin said CBD also helped him get much needed sleep, devoid of nightmares.

Currently, the 116th Congress is considering multiple bills aimed at medical cannabis; however, none of them is focused solely on medicinal hemp, the one element that could legally be pushed through thanks to the Farm Bill.

"Hemp is now federally legal. There's nothing stopping the VA from studying it," said Steve Danyluk, founder, Warfighter Hemp and author, The 2019 Medicinal Hemp Research Act. "So, what's the holdup? Every day we wait, more



veterans are dying."

Danyluk founded Warfighter Hemp in 2017 after retiring as a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Marines. His last tour was working wounded issues at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, which opened his eyes to the opioid impact on veterans. He knew there had to be a better solution.

He's working with legislators to introduce the 2019 Medicinal Hemp Research Act, which would allow the VA to study CBD derived from industrial hemp and ultimately prescribe CBD as it currently does other supplements.

"CBD derived from industrial hemp can be easily sourced and provided to veterans and anyone suffering from chronic pain. We have hundreds of testimonials that it works. We now need Congress to do the work to pass a bill forcing the VA to study it," said Danyluk.

Warfighter Hemp grows its hemp on Colorado's largest organic hemp farm. This 100 percent organic, U.S.-grown hemp results in high-quality CBD, of critical importance, as some CBD is shipped from overseas under unknown conditions. Fifty percent of Warfighter Hemp proceeds go to support veteran charities.

To learn more about what you can do to help get the 2019 Medicinal Hemp Research Act introduced and passed, visit <https://warfighterhemp.com/va-2019-medicinal-hemp-research-act/> to complete a form and send to your Congress person.

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The Cannabis industry: much more than smoke and mirrors

Some U.S. economists, along with an expanding number of potential investors and entrepreneurs, are convinced that the legal marijuana industry could very well overtake manufacturing, in regard to the creation of jobs, by 2020. A business intelligence firm focused on the cannabis industry has projected that the marketplace for legal marijuana is expected to create more than a quarter of a million jobs by next year.

Compare that to manufacturing jobs, which, by 2024, are expected to decline by as much as 814,000, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

While this forecast has been described as extremely optimistic and based on optimal circumstances, there is no denying that these projections appear to be on the right path.

So what, other than state-by-state legalization, is fueling the cannabis industry's phenomenal potential for growth? Here are some of the developing consumer trends noted by researchers:

- A Gallup poll on cannabis use, conducted in 2016, indicated that 13% of Americans were active marijuana users at that time. That was nearly twice as many as the same poll, conducted in 2013, indicated. Sometime this year, a new Gallup poll on this topic is scheduled and it is anticipated that the upward trend will continue.

- The cannabis consumer is diversifying across age and gender. A recent report issued by a cannabis delivery service in California reveals the cannabis consumer is diversifying. According to their data, first-time cannabis consumers increased by 140% with women and Baby Boomers as the fastest growing market segments.

- The same report cited that Baby Boomer

customers in 2018 were up 25% over 2017. And the number of female consumers nearly doubled to 38% at the end of 2018. Some of the changes in the cannabis consumer base are attributed to the growing popularity of CBD products and a more diverse range of users.

- Wall Street's top cannabis analyst predicts that the U.S. cannabis industry will grow to \$80 billion – yes, billion – by 2030, assuming we reach nationwide availability in the years ahead.

- According to Gallup, 66% of Americans support the legalization of recreational marijuana. When the same poll was initially taken in 1969, only 12% of Americans supported it. Politically speaking, 53% of Republicans and 71% of Democrats are presently in favor, indicating that the legalization of recreational pot in Republican-dominated states still lags at the state level. Yet 2018 marked the first year that Republicans reached majority support for legalization; Democrats reached majority support ten years ago, in 2009.

- At the present time, a total of 11 U.S. Senators (six Democrats and five Republicans) have signed the so-called States' Act, which would rewrite federal law to defer to states' individual policies on legal cannabis. It would mean that any organization compliant with state laws would no longer be deemed unlawful federally and there would be a new influx of tax revenue. So these businesses would no longer need to engage in money laundering.

This is just a small representation of the trends and signs of dramatic growth in both the recreational and medical marijuana industries. Investors across North America are watching very carefully, as are members of the medical and pharmaceutical industries.



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DIY: Making Cannabis Edibles at Home

If the idea of smoking or “vaping” (vaporizing) just isn’t your cup of tea, you can still reap the therapeutic benefits of cannabis by consuming cannabis-infused edibles.

It’s no secret that long before some states began to legalize medical and recreational marijuana use, some people have been making and using their own cannabis-infused edibles. The Alice B. Toklas Cook Book, first published in 1954, has been credited with making pot brownies famous among cannabis users of

the past sixty or so years. But edibles have definitely come a long way since then.

Today’s edibles have evolved into a wide range of recipes and forms. From medical marijuana gummies to a variety of cannabis-infused entrees, today’s choices are limited only by the imaginations of their creators.

Yet, there are some basic lessons one must learn before heading to your kitchen and begin cooking or baking with cannabis. Lesson number one is to know what “decarboxylating” (commonly referred to

as “decarbing”) is.

In scientific terms, decarboxylation is a chemical reaction that removes a carboxyl group and releases carbon dioxide. The reason that this process is critical is because it causes the THC-A in raw cannabis to be converted to THC, which is its psychoactive ingredient that causes users of edibles to feel their effects.

This process occurs automatically when people smoke or vape cannabis. But when making your own edibles at home, it is a crucial step that must not be overlooked.

And here is how you do it: Place your cannabis or cannabis concentrate in an oven-proof dish or baking sheet and cover with foil. Place it in a preheated 240-degree oven for approximately an hour – that’s it! You will probably notice that you have lost a little volume in the process, but that’s normal. Your cannabis is now “decarbed” and ready for cooking or baking.

So, now for some recipe ideas – and they often start with cannabis butter. Here’s how to make this staple of any cannabis user’s kitchen:

CROCKPOT CANNABIS BUTTER (MAKES 1 CUP FOR COOKING)

You will need:

Crockpot (any size)
Cheesecloth (for straining)
Plastic storage container with lid

Ingredients:

4 cups water
2 sticks real butter
¼ ounce decarbed cannabis

Directions:

Place all three ingredients into the crock-pot and set the temperature to LOW.

Slow cook the mixture for 6 to 18 hours (12 hours on average). The longer you cook it, the stronger the product will be, both in potency and taste. Also, the more cannabis you use, the more potent it will be.

When cooking is done, strain the mixture using cheesecloth into a plastic food-storage container and chill in refrigerator for approximately 6 hours or until completely solid. This will separate the butter from the water and you can simply pour the water out of the container. What will be left is one cup of cannabutter to use for baking and cooking.

Store your cannabutter the same way as regular butter. It can also be frozen if you are not planning on using it soon.

Listed on this page are just a few ways you can use it.



“CLASSIC CANNABIS BROWNIES”

Ingredients:

1/2 cup cannabutter (to make a weaker batch, use 1/4 cup cannabutter with 1/4 cup real unsalted butter)

1 cup white sugar
1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
1/4 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. vanilla extract
2 eggs
1/2 cup chopped nuts (optional)

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease pan (8x8 or 9x9) lightly with cooling spray. Combine cocoa powder, flour, salt, and baking powder together in a mixing bowl and set aside. Melt butter (or butters), not letting it reach a boil. Mix sugar and vanilla into the butter. Add sugar, butter, eggs and vanilla to dry ingredients. Beat mixture until velvety and pour into baking pan. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes; let cool to room temperature.

“CANNABIS CORNBREAD”

Ingredients:

1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon unsalted butter
2 tsp. cannabutter
3/4 cup fine ground cornmeal
3/4 cup all-purpose flour

1/3 cup sugar
5 tsp. baking powder
3/4 tsp. salt
1 cup milk (at room temperature)
1 egg (at room temperature)

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400degrees and grease an 8-inch cake pan or cast-iron skillet with cooking spray. Melt butter and cannabutter in a small bowl in the microwave or in a saucepan on the stove over medium. Let cool slightly. In a large bowl, whisk together cornmeal, flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt. In a liquid measuring cup, beat egg into milk with a fork until combined. Stir in butters. Pour contents of the measuring cup into the dry ingredients. Mix until just combined.

Pour into pan or skillet and spread evenly. Optional: spread 1/4 cup sharp cheddar cheese and 1/4 cup chopped jalapeños on top. Bake until golden and a crust forms along the edges, 18-20 minutes.

Let cool slightly, slice into 12 pieces.



“SO SIMPLE CANNABIS MAC & CHEESE”


Ingredients:

1 box Kraft (or any other brand) macaroni and cheese
2 teaspoons cannabutter

Directions:

Prepare as directed on package. Substitute cannabutter (for butter or margarine) when mixing with milk and cheese packet.

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Mother and teen daughter treat rare inherited disorders with cannabis

BY JENNY JOHNSON

Special to Cannabis Connection

A woman and her teenage daughter are finding relief through cannabis from the painful symptoms of a rare disease for which they say there are no other effective treatments.

Both mother and daughter suffer from Ehlers-Danlos syndrome (EDS), a rare set of inherited disorders affecting connective tissues, which cause a number of severe complications. They were both diagnosed around four years ago.

As a result of EDS, Sarah Dyer suffers from Chiari malformation, a condition in which brain tissue extends into the spinal canal, compressing the spine and brain stem, as well as a number of related diagnoses.

Sarah said smoking cannabis relieves intense pressure in her head.

"Sometimes it gets so bad, and by using cannabis, it's almost like it instantly takes it away," Sarah said. "All the medications I have tried – prescribed – have not touched what cannabis has been able to do."

Sarah's daughter Emma-Leigh McCutcheon, a teenager in high school, suffers from Syringomyelia, a condition of fluid-filled cysts in the spinal cord, and other diagnoses as a result of EDS.

"I have bubbles in my spine," Emma said. "I also get wrist, ankle, and knee aches from the EDS."

Emma said she never was even prescribed medicine for her condition, but cannabis has proved effective. "You feel good. You don't hurt as badly," Emma said about the effects of smoking marijuana. "I can smoke, and then I can do my homework, and I get 100

on it." She said it also helps her sleep better at night.

Both said they do not feel cannabis is a pain reliever, but rather a tool to help them deal with the deep nerve pain they experience.

"Cannabis has made it so I can function and tolerate the pain," Sarah said.

"I think it just makes it so you forget it," Emma added.

"Yeah, it's almost like it puts it on the back burner," Sarah said.

Sarah said cannabis aided her recovery from neurosurgery, allowing her to bounce back more quickly than doctors expected.

"Most people are out of work for about four months with what I had done, and I was back to work within two months, ready to go," Sarah said. "Even during that two months, my mom really had to tell me to slow down and let yourself heal."

Emma also recovered more rapidly than anticipated from a surgery with the use of cannabis capsules, they said, returning to school in about half the expected recovery time.

Sarah hopes that cannabis is also acting to protect their nerves from further damage.

"While there's no cure for what we have, hopefully we can delay the progression. It's all I can hope for," Sarah said.

Emma said some of her friends are jealous that she gets to smoke marijuana, but her disease prohibits her from doing many of the things they can do, like go to gym class, jump on a trampoline, and ride rollercoasters. Access to cannabis has made her disease more manageable amid those limitations.

"I do better with it," Emma said. "I don't know what I would do without it."



Photo by Katya Danilova

Both Sarah Dyer and her daughter Emma-Leigh McCutcheon suffer from Ehlers-Danlos syndrome (EDS), a rare set of inherited disorders affecting connective tissues, which cause a number of severe complications. They use cannabis to relieve the pain.




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What research says about cannabis and cancer

Attitudes about marijuana are changing. Such changes are reflected in legislation that has legalized marijuana in many areas and, in some instances, unofficially decriminalized possession of small amounts of marijuana in other places.

Shifting attitudes about marijuana, also known as cannabis, may be attributed to various factors, including medical research. Though research studying the effects of marijuana on recovering cancer patients is ongoing, cancer patients and their families may be curious about the potential for cannabis to assist in their recoveries.

What is marijuana?

Marijuana is a plant that originated in central Asia but is now grown in many parts of the world. According to the National Cancer Institute, the cannabis plant produces a resin that contains compounds known as “cannabinoids,” which are active chemicals that, when ingested, affect various parts of

the human body, including the central nervous system and the immune system. One active cannabinoid is cannabidiol, or CBD, which the NCI notes may relieve pain and inflammation without making users feel the “high” that other cannabinoids produce.

What are some other potential effects of cannabinoids?

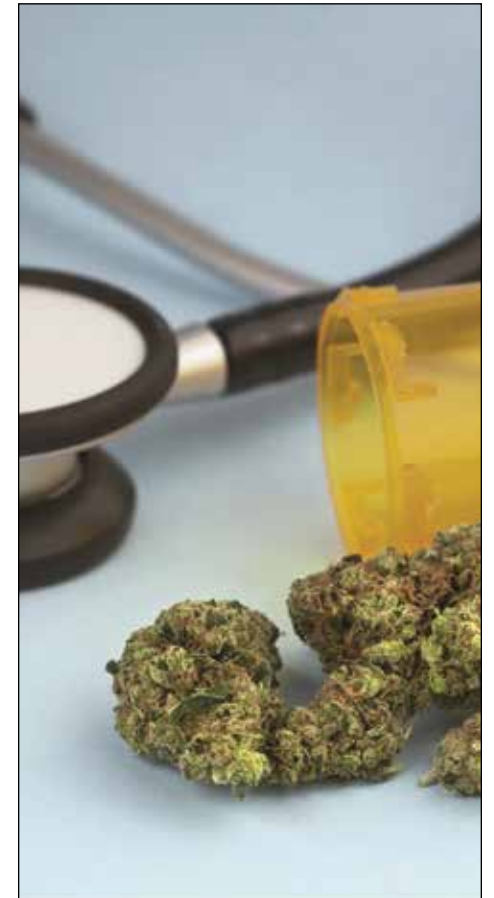
The NCI notes that research has shown that cannabinoids may be able to do more than relieve cancer patients’ pain and inflammation. While additional research is necessary, the NCI says cannabinoids may be able to block cell growth. The NCI points to studies in mice and rats that have shown that cannabinoids may inhibit tumor growth by causing cell death, blocking cell growth and blocking the development of blood vessels that tumors need to grow. Cancer is marked by the uncontrolled division of abnormal cells, so the potential for cannabinoids to block that growth is a significant benefit.

In addition, the NCI cites laboratory and animal studies that have shown that cannabinoids may be able to kill cancer cells while protecting normal cells. Have cannabinoids been linked to particular cancers?

Studies have shown that cannabinoids may have an effect on various types of cancer, including breast cancer and liver cancer. The NCI notes that a laboratory study of delta-9-THC, the main active cannabinoid in marijuana, in liver cancer cells indicated that the cannabinoid damaged or killed the cancer cells. Another laboratory study of CBD in estrogen receptor positive and estrogen receptor negative breast cancer cells showed that CBD caused cancer cell death while having little effect on normal breast cells.

Societal attitudes about marijuana are shifting, and ongoing research regarding its potential benefits in treating cancer may be changing the way the medical community views marijuana as well.

— MetroCreative



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How to choose the right cannabis dispensary

BY ALLISON CARMEN
Cannabis Consultant
Special to Cannabis Connection

MAINE's cannabis industry has experienced a surge of growth in recent years. In a sea of options, how do you choose a dispensary that fits your lifestyle and needs? Whether you are a cannabis connoisseur or green to the industry, here are a few key questions to guide your decision:

Is the product quality consistent?

Batch quality and consistency varies most significantly among dispensaries that source cannabis from wholesalers rather than operating their own grow. Dispensaries that control supply chain (beginning with the grow space) will likely be more forthcoming with details on potency, cannabinoid profile, and nuances between various flower strains.

Online resources like MarijuanaDoctors.com and Leafly.com are trusted sources for customer reviews and provide robust search tools to discover top shelf strains and the dispensaries that stock them.

Was the staff helpful, experienced, and welcoming?

Walking into a dispensary can be intimidating. It is staff's responsibility to make every guest feel welcome as soon as they walk in the door and valued when they depart.

Look for a dispensary with friendly and knowledgeable budtenders who can guide you through the selection process and answer important questions on the strains you're interested in. A great dispensary will have informed staff who are passionate about helping you choose the right products to fit your specific medical needs.



Was the atmosphere inviting?

Purchasing cannabis should never make you feel uncomfortable. Make sure your dispensary visit is enjoyable by finding one with a welcoming atmosphere. Staff play a key role in setting the stage for a laid-back and informative shopping experience. However, the location itself should have a clean and professional layout where all visitors feel at ease.

Whether you are with a group of friends on a Friday night or taking your mom to get her Sunday meds - positive vibes and an inviting atmosphere are always in style.

Is there a large variety?

A dispensary with a wide variety of flower and product generally updates their inventory more regularly, and can have fresher inventory than a store with fewer options available.

An ideal dispensary will have a variety of products - including cannabis flower, medicated wholefoods, candies, baked goods, tinctures, beverages, syrups, extracts, salves, & CBD products - and can help advise on what form of ingestion, application, or

unique strains may be right for you.

The Cannabis plant yields over one hundred compounds (cannabinoids) that are able to unlock and activate receptors in the body's regulatory (endocannabinoid) system. THC and CBD are the most common cannabinoids used to help normalize mood, digestion, immunity, and other key regulatory functions. Endocannabinoid systems are as unique to each person as their fingerprint - which is why diversity in product offering is so important.

If you are lucky enough to find a dispensary with an in-house kitchen, prepare to be spoiled with an extensive menu of everything you've heard about and wanted to try. You might even be greeted with tempting aromas of freshly-made treats from time to time.

Are you happy with what you got for the price you paid?

The cannabis industry is booming, and dispensaries are under pressure to keep prices competitive. Unfortunately, in some cases this means cutting corners on quality or liquidation

slow-selling product at a discount to get it off the shelves quickly. Always inspect your cannabis before you buy it. The quality should not be low, even if the cost is.

Try to avoid dispensaries with inconsistent or fluctuating prices. Instead, build a relationship with a dispensary that has invested in a business model that consistently save customers money through daily deals, rewards programs, regular discounts, and price breaks on larger purchases. Dispensaries that put customers first realize budgets fluctuate - and offer pricing tiers with something for everyone.

Do they offer rewards for customer loyalty?

Some dispensaries offer additional benefits that make life easier on customers, like quick delivery service or on-site medical cards. These concierge services - along with special deals for new customers and loyalty rewards programs for repeat buyers - will have you on a first-name basis at your favorite local shop in no time.

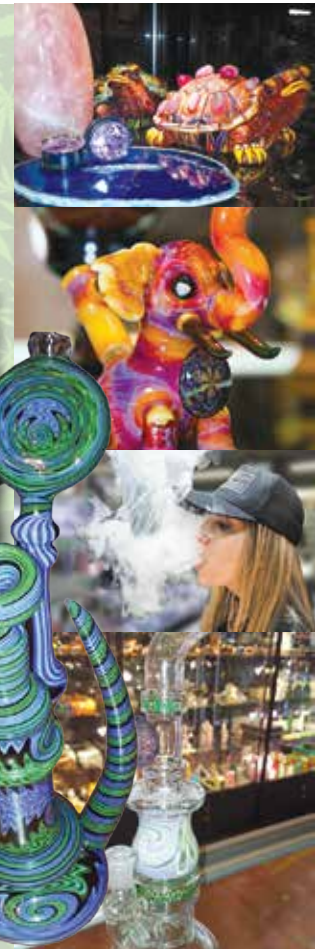
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