



Treating
AUTOIMMUNE
DISEASE

Millions of people suffer from painful conditions from lupus to celiac disease, and it's becoming clear cannabinoids might be a safer alternative for relief.

For those patients whose immune systems trigger inflammatory responses in their bodies causing conditions like multiple sclerosis and lupus, CBD is proving a useful tool. Pain, swelling and nausea are the most common symptoms affecting those with autoimmune disorders, as much as 20 percent of the U.S. population—most of them women. All of these symptoms have been shown to be ameliorated by CBD for some patients. As more research on the subject comes together, the ability of CBD to help seems to be coming closer to the breaking point of scientific consensus. For example, in 2012, French researchers discovered the presence of cannabinoid receptors on the membranes of mitochondria,

the cellular “powerhouses” that create energy on a cellular level.

The presence of these receptors means we are hardwired to use cannabinoids within our body’s cells. According to Project CBD, “Defects in mitochondria have been linked to a wide range of neurodegenerative, autoimmune and metabolic disorders.” Another thing worth noting is when talking about CBD’s effect on the often crippling pain and discomfort caused by serious autoimmune disorders is what many commentators are calling “the entourage effect.” In a 2011 report in the *British Journal of Pharmacology*, Dr. Ethan Russo suggests in order to receive the full therapeutic benefits of cannabis, patients should also be exposed to terpenoids, which are often lacking in CBD-only products.

PATIENTS SPEAK

Goldleaf founder Charles McElroy suffers from the autoimmune condition psoriasis, as well as painful arthritis, and CBD helps him manage both.

Before CBD, what was your treatment like?

Limited, frustrating and costly. After a handful of failed attempts with other medication, my rheumatologist started me on methotrexate—basically a low-grade chemo drug with astounding side effects. It was a low dose, but it did not help and led to low energy and long-term nausea. This mixed

with the fact that by even being prescribed this drug, my ability to purchase life insurance, disability or other forms of medical insurance were more difficult and expensive. An all-around frustrating fail.

When and how did it become clear CBD was a better option for treating your symptoms?

Experimentation. I simply started trying it and saw the results. To be clear, I wouldn’t say it is a cure-all, but it has shown to be more effective at treating the symptoms compared to anything else I’ve tried. After further personal trials, I

found that regular but small doses (microdosing) gave me the best results. I haven’t looked back or even visited the rheumatologist again since finding something that works.

What does CBD offer you that more conventional treatments do not?

Apart from partial relief of my symptoms, it offers peace of mind. CBD is nontoxic and I choose to only purchase products with a transparent business model and clear information on its origin and manufacturing. Name another pharmaceutical that can offer that to patients!

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