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Marijuana fights Alzheimer's disease, new study indicates

Posted on November 29, 2014 at 9:32 am by David Downs in Health, Science

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Another study is adding evidence to the case for the treatment and prevention of Alzheimer's disease with the compounds in cannabis.

Research published in the *Journal of Alzheimer's Disease* this September "strongly suggest that THC [the main active ingredient in marijuana] could be a potential therapeutic treatment option for Alzheimer's disease through multiple functions and pathways."

More than five million Americans have Alzheimer's today. One in three seniors will die with Alzheimer's or another dementia, and Alzheimer's is the sixth leading cause of death in the nation, costing America about \$203 billion in 2013.

Chuanhai Cao and other researchers at the University of South Florida and Thomas Jefferson University wanted to investigate the "potential therapeutic qualities of Δ9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) with respect to slowing or halting the hallmark characteristics of Alzheimer's disease."

So they treated Alzheimer's research cells (N2a-variant amyloid-β protein precursor (AβPP) cells) with THC and examined them for amyloid-β at the 6, 24, and 48-hour time markers. Amyloid-β is a type of protein that is linked to Alzheimer's symptoms. The researchers found THC "to be effective at lowering Aβ levels ... in a dose-dependent manner."

The main active ingredient in pot "directly interacts" with amyloid-β, "thereby inhibiting aggregation". THC was also effective at lowering other key Alzheimer's Disease markers. Furthermore "no toxicity" was observed from the THC. The researchers also found THC "enhances" the function of the cell's energy factories — the mitochondria.

"THC is known to be a potent antioxidant with neuroprotective properties, but this is the first report that the compound directly affects Alzheimer's pathology by decreasing amyloid beta levels, inhibiting its aggregation, and enhancing mitochondrial function," stated study lead author Chuanhai Cao, PhD and a neuroscientist at the Byrd Alzheimer's Institute and the USF College of Pharmacy.

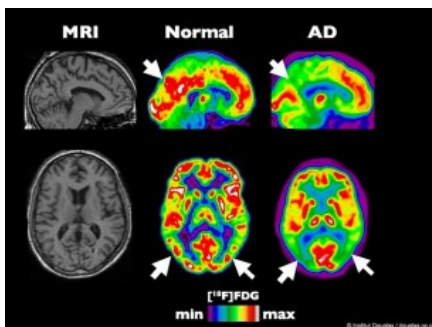
"Decreased levels of amyloid beta means less aggregation, which may protect against the progression of Alzheimer's disease. Since THC is a natural and relatively safe amyloid inhibitor, THC or its analogs may help us develop an effective treatment in the future."

Other research in the same journal that month indicates THC boosts the body's natural anti-Alzheimer's fighting mechanism — the endocannabinoid system.

Alzheimer's Disease is thought to result from a lifetime of brain inflammation. Cannabis is one of the most safe anti-inflammatories in medicine. Some neuroscientists believe a bout of pot smoking in early adulthood may prevent Alzheimer's onset later in life. Cannabis slows brain aging, Time reported in 2012.

Smoking, vaping, or eating the pot molecules THC and CBD directly effects nerve cell function, reducing chronic brain inflammation, oxidative stress, and cellular dysfunction — all the while promoting stability of the human body's internal environment (homeostasis) and healthy brain cells (neurotrophic support), studies show.

"What we found was that not only did the single puff a day reverse the memory impairment but also



The anti-inflammatory cannabis may prevent Alzheimer's Disease later in life, researchers suspect (via Flickr - institut-douglas w/ CC license)

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restarted neurogenesis," Ohio State University, Gary Wenk [told](#) the *Seattle Post Intelligencer* this year.

Other [studies](#) have shown THC inhibits other key pathological markers of Alzheimer's Disease.

The U.S. government has [patented](#) marijuana molecule CBD as a neuroprotectant, even as it maintains that cannabis is a schedule 1 drug with no medical use and high potential for abuse. The federal drug war is blocking deeper research into cannabis' impacts on brain disease, Wenk states.

126

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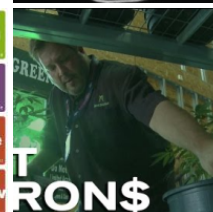
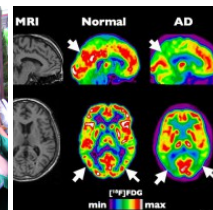
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minimal Rank 17

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WesleyDodds Rank 13965

That's what we really need stoned Alzheimer's Disease patients. They aren't difficult enough to deal with as is, we should get them stoned, on top of everything else. Do you know they HALLUCINATE? Do you know about their behavioral problems? Do you think getting them stoned on top of their dementia, behavioral problems, hallucinations, etc., is somehow going to improve their "quality of life"? Should we get Alzheimer's Disease patients DRUNK to improve their "quality of life"? Anyone who... » more

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TheMadHiker Rank 15704

@WesleyDodds Sorry, but your bias and ignorance are both off the charts. The cannabinoids found in the plant ATTACK THE DISEASE itself. This has nothing to do with being stoned; which is merely a side effect. If you had even bothered reading the article, you would have read about how the study found that THC "directly affects Alzheimer's pathology by decreasing amyloid beta levels, inhibiting its aggregation, and enhancing mitochondrial function". Does whiskey do that? Of course not! You... » more

23 hours ago 2 Likes

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DaveWK Rank 19985

@WesleyDodds US Patent 6630507 titled "Cannabinoids as antioxidants and neuroprotectants" is assigned to The United States of America, as represented by the Department of Health and Human Services.

The patent claims that -

"Cannabinoids have been found to have antioxidant properties, unrelated to NMDA receptor antagonism. This new found property makes cannabinoids useful in the treatment and prophylaxis of wide variety of oxidation associated diseases, such as ischemic, age-related,... » more

3 hours ago (edited) 0 Likes

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MildGreens Rank 0

@shek_yerbouti There is neither logic nor reason to your naked prejudice. There is one thing I can say for certain that narrow-mindedness has contributed bugger all to science or medicine. That being so, clearly a cure for it is a long way off. I regret to say, where the affliction is so serious, you'll probably die with it. Alone and miserable. You can be saved however.... cannabinoids might just open your mind! Be prepared, you might live long, make friends and be happy! What I don't... » more

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chriztian Rank 6513

@MildGreens beautiful. Thank you!

1 day ago 0 Likes

Like Reply Share



WesleyDodds Rank 13965

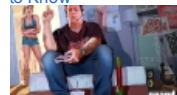
That's what we really need stoned Dementia patients. They aren't difficult enough to deal with as is, we should get them stoned, on otop of everyting else.



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[Like](#) [Reply](#) [Share](#)[View 4 more replies](#)**WesleyDodds** Rank 13965

@daisy0072 I don't believe it. NO ONE could be so CRUEL and VICIOUS as to want to confuse an Alzheimer's Disease patient more than already are, with Marijuana. You think it is funny? It is sick. Yes the existing AD drugs out there don't work, or if they do, they only work for a very short time, and then they don't. But to give an Alzheimer's Disease patient an intoxicant. That is just cruel beyond any imagination. I am sure this was written by a millennial who is looking for one more...

» more

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[Like](#) [Reply](#) [Share](#)**daisy0072** Rank 1222

@WesleyDodds Wesley, I never expressed humor in my comment. You are ignorant about the law and caregiving.

You are also ignorant about medication. Many residents in Memory Care units are on intoxicating drugs, that's common.

You have no idea what you are talking about.

1 day ago 1 Like

[Like](#) [Reply](#) [Share](#)**mauigolfer22** Rank 3199

Whether it helps avoid Alzheimer's is up for debate. What is not up for debate is that it makes you stupid and by reading some of these posts I think they have made my case. I have never met a high level successful person who has indulged in this DRUG for long periods of time. I guess this is why we have winners and losers in life. Keep smoking and laughing at the reruns of the Brady Bunch you can catch on Comcast..

2 days ago 2 Likes

[Like](#) [Reply](#) [Share](#)[View 7 more replies](#)**Kevin_Hunt** Rank 21197

@mauigolfer22 Sorry that all the people that you know are unsuccessful. Looks like you have never attended graduate school at a top engineering college where half of the 4.0 GPA students that you know use marijuana on a regular basis.

Famous Marijuana Consumers:

Carl Sagan, Willie Nelson, Sir Paul McCartney, Rick Santorum, Newt Gingrich, Bill Clinton, Barack Obama, Sir Richard Branson, Rick Steves, Michael Phelps, Michael Bloomberg, Ted Turner, Montel Williams, Stephen King, Arnold... » more

1 day ago 1 Like

[Like](#) [Reply](#) [Share](#)**Kevin_Hunt** Rank 21197

@WesleyDodds "I am sure you could come up with a list of so-called "highly successful" boozers, as well. What does that prove"?

It proves that people can use drugs and still be successful, which proves your stupid theories WRONG.

1 day ago 1 Like

[Like](#) [Reply](#) [Share](#)**ima** Rank 1445

[I previously posted this comment on a recent article about marijuana's effect on a particular type of brain tumor.] Now 67, my sister has advanced Alzheimer's & her husband & I take care of her 24/7. Last winter, after consulting with her neurologist, we began giving her medical marijuana (choc candy edibles). The positive change has been dramatic. While she is by no means cured & still requires full time care for everything, she is much happier, frequently laughing & clowning around. It is... » more

2 days ago 9 Likes

[Like](#) [Reply](#) [Share](#)**undgrndgirl** Rank 737

@ima

i'm sorry to hear about your sister. hope you are all doing well. my mother has it at age 84, but my dad won't let me give her cannabis though i've been sending him information for 8 years (when his sister was diagnosed). fortunately for us, mom hasn't gotten to the agitated, angry, combative stage yet.

1 day ago 3 Likes

[Like](#) [Reply](#) [Share](#)**dementia** Rank 22237

There is not a need for illegal or legalized drugs to stop dementia!

The reason for the growing dementia and Alzheimer's crisis is the fact that people are not aware that the illnesses can be reversed.

A very targeted and specific combination of natural foods has been shown to reverse much of the illness. UCLA researchers showed that much of Alzheimer's can be reversed with targeted diet. just google "MAL ALZHEIMER"

2 days ago (edited) 0 Likes

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**WesleyDodds** Rank 13965

@dementia BS

1 day ago 0 Likes

[Like](#) [Reply](#) [Share](#)**TheMadHiker** Rank 15704

@dementia If diet can indeed have a beneficial effect on the disease (which is certainly possible - I am an advocate of food as medicine), imagine what kind of results can be achieved by COMBINING that diet AND cannabis therapy!

23 hours ago 2 Likes

[Like](#) [Reply](#) [Share](#)**permiewriter** Rank 43

If you're going to use cannabis, please vaporize or use edibles. Smoking, even if it's much less dangerous than cigarette smoke, still damages your lungs (and those of people around you).

2 days ago 2 Likes

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**TheMadHiker** Rank 15704

@Grift Huh? I "cherry picked" nothing. I guess you are just saying that because you dislike the cannabis plant and don't want it to be true? The study I linked to is a meta-study, performed by the world's most preeminent expert on how marijuana smoking affects the lungs, that references every other study to date on the subject. In fact, it is the exact OPPOSITE of cherry-picking.

2 hours ago 0 Likes

[Like](#) [Reply](#) [Share](#)**TheMadHiker** Rank 15704

@Grift In reference to your response to daisy0072, you could not be more wrong. The US government and many others have been trying to prove that marijuana smoking is very dangerous and harmful for decades (while simultaneously blocking all research on beneficial medical use or seeking to show lack of harm). They successfully showed some small degree of lung tissue damage, compared the smoke to that of known greatly harmful tobacco smoke and hypothesized it would lead to cancer and all manner... » more

1 hour ago 0 Likes

[Like](#) [Reply](#) [Share](#)**PhDScientist** Rank 9134

Like the majority of Americans, I strongly support the immediate, complete legalization of Marijuana.

But as a Scientist with a strong interest in Cancer research, I feel even more strongly about the need for its immediate legalization of it for Medical use, and the need to ensure that no Cancer patient is denied it, than I've ever felt about any issue, because I'm so impressed with its benefits for Cancer patients.

I urge everyone reading this to PLEASE call and email the Attorney General,... » more

2 days ago 11 Likes

[Like](#) [Reply](#) [Share](#)**shek_yerbouti** Rank 271

@GreedRulesUS Hahahahaha. Dude, stop, you're killing me. I read the article. I see a lot of maybes, coulds and shoulds. Didn't see a 'does', didn't see a 'will'. This is one 'study' and its findings are hypothetical at best. So, no, I doubt that anyone is eating humble pie just yet. But I'd get ready

to get your own slice warmed up if I was you. Unless you take yours cold. It's people like you, with your \$100 'medical marijuana' cards purchased from some sham 'doctor' that are doing more damage... » more

2 days ago 1 Like

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daisy0072 Rank 1222

@WesleyDodds I think that the scientific method works. You are a science-denier.

1 day ago 2 Likes

Like Reply Share



TheMadHiker Rank 15704

@WesleyDodds You are the deluded one. Even the US government's own patent (<http://patft.uspto.gov/netacgi/nph-Parser?Sect1=PTO1&Sect2=HITOFF&d=PALL&p=1&u=%2Fnetahml%2FPTO%2Fsrchnum.htm&r=1&f=G&l=50&s1=6630507.PN.&OS=PN/6630507&RS=PN/6630507>) demonstrates this: "In particular embodiments, the pharmaceutical composition of the present invention is used for PREVENTING, arresting, or treating neurological damage in Parkinson's disease, ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE and HIV dementia; autoimmune... » more

22 hours ago 2 Likes

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St. Jude patient Samantha, age 13

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