



## Cannabis and Cannabinoids (PDQ®)

[Health Professional Version](#)**Last Modified:** 03/30/2011

### General Information

Cannabis, also known as [marijuana](#), originated in Central Asia but is grown worldwide today. In the United States, it is a controlled substance and is classified as a Schedule I agent (a [drug](#) with increased potential for abuse and no known medical use). The Cannabis plant produces a [resin](#) containing psychoactive [compounds](#) called cannabinoids. The highest [concentration](#) of cannabinoids is found in the female flowers of the plant.[1] As a [botanical](#), Cannabis is difficult to study because of the lack of standardization of the botanical product due to the many climates and environments in which it is grown. [Clinical trials](#) conducted on medicinal Cannabis are limited. The [U.S. Food and Drug Administration](#) (FDA) has not approved the use of Cannabis as a treatment for any medical [condition](#). To conduct [clinical](#) drug research in the United States, researchers must file an [Investigational](#) New Drug (IND) application with the FDA.

The potential benefits of medicinal Cannabis for people living with [cancer](#) include [antiemetic](#) effects, [appetite](#) stimulation, pain relief, and improved sleep. Though no relevant surveys of practice patterns exist, it appears that [physicians](#) caring for cancer patients who prescribe medicinal Cannabis predominantly do so for [symptom management](#).

Cannabinoids are a group of terpenophenolic compounds found in Cannabis species (Cannabis sativa L. and Cannabis indica Lam.). This summary will review the role of Cannabis and the cannabinoids in the treatment of people with cancer and disease-related or treatment-related [side effects](#).

### References

1. Adams IB, Martin BR: Cannabis: pharmacology and toxicology in animals and humans. *Addiction* 91 (11): 1585-614, 1996. [[PUBMED Abstract](#)]

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