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## Cannabidiol Use for Fibromyalgia: Prevalence of Use and Perceptions of Effectiveness in a Large Online Survey

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### Abstract

Cannabidiol (CBD) is widely advertised as helpful for chronic pain management but research is limited. Using a cross-sectional, anonymous survey, we examined patterns of naturalistic CBD use among individuals with fibromyalgia (FM) and other chronic pain conditions. Our objective was to better understand rates of CBD use, reasons for use and discontinuation, communication with healthcare professionals about CBD, and perceptions of CBD effectiveness and safety among people with FM. After excluding incomplete surveys, our study population consisted of N = 2,701 participants with fibromyalgia, primarily in the United States. Overall, 38.1% reported never using CBD, 29.4% reported past CBD use, and 32.4% reported current CBD use. Past-year cannabis use was strongly associated with past or current CBD use. Those using CBD typically did so due to inadequate symptom relief, while those not using CBD typically cited safety concerns as their reason for not using CBD. Two-thirds of participants disclosed CBD use to their physician, although only 33% asked for physician advice on using CBD. Participants used CBD for numerous FM-related symptoms (most commonly pain), and generally reported slight to much improvement across symptom domains. Around half of participants reported side effects, which were typically minor. Our findings are limited by selection bias and our cross-sectional design, which prevents causal associations. In conclusion, CBD use is common among individuals with FM and many individuals using CBD report improvements across numerous FM-related symptoms. Our findings highlight the need for additional rigorous studies to better understand CBD's potential for FM management. **PERSPECTIVE:** This article indicates that CBD use is common among people with fibromyalgia, and the results suggest that many derive benefit from using CBD across multiple symptoms domains. Clinicians should discuss CBD use with fibromyalgia patients, and future studies are needed to rigorously assess CBD's therapeutic value for fibromyalgia symptoms.

**Keywords:** Fibromyalgia; cannabidiol; chronic pain; prevalence; symptom relief.

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