

Period of 2015 to 2018 saw increase in cannabis use in seniors

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(HealthDay)—From 2015 to 2018, there was an increase in the

prevalence of cannabis use among older adults, according to a research letter published online Feb. 24 in *JAMA Internal Medicine*.

Benjamin H. Han, M.D., M.P.H., from the New York University School of Medicine, and Joseph J. Palamar, Ph.D., M.P.H., from the New York University College of Global Public Health, examined trends in [cannabis use](#) among 14,896 adults aged 65 years and older from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (2015 to 2018).

The researchers found that the prevalence of past-year cannabis use increased significantly from 2.4 to 4.2 percent among adults aged 65 years and older (relative increase, 75 percent). Significant increases were seen among women, individuals of white and nonwhite races/ethnicities, those with a [college education](#), those with an income of \$20,000 to \$49,000 and \geq \$75,000, and married individuals. Among adults with diabetes, there was a 180 percent increase in use, from 1.0 to 2.8 percent. A significant 95.8 percent relative increase in cannabis use was seen among individuals reporting one or no [chronic diseases](#) (from 2.4 to 4.7 percent). Significant increases were also seen for those who received mental health treatment and those reporting past-year alcohol use.

"Older adults are especially vulnerable to potential adverse effects from cannabis, and with their increase in cannabis use, there is an urgent need to better understand both the benefits and risks of cannabis use in this population," the authors write.

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