

Cannabis use for menopause symptom management

28 September 2020



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As legislation relaxes regarding cannabis, it is being used to manage numerous chronic health conditions and mood symptoms. A new study indicates that a growing number of women are either using cannabis or want to use it for the management of bothersome menopause symptoms. Study results will be presented during the 2020 Virtual Annual Meeting of The North American Menopause Society (NAMS), which opens on September 28.

In a sample of 232 women (mean age, 55.95 y) in Northern California who participated in the Midlife Women Veterans Health Survey, more than half reported such bothersome symptoms as hot flashes and night sweats (54%), insomnia (27%), and genitourinary symptoms (69%). Roughly 27% of those sampled reported having used or were currently using cannabis to manage their symptoms. An additional 10% of participants expressed an interest in trying cannabis to manage menopause symptoms in the future. In contrast, only 19% reported using a more traditional type of menopause [symptom](#) management, such as hormone therapy.

Cannabis for menopause symptom management was most often used in women reporting hot flashes and night sweats. Such use did not differ by age, race/ethnicity, [socioeconomic status](#), or mental health conditions.

"These findings suggest that cannabis use to manage menopause symptoms may be relatively common. However, we do not know whether cannabis use is safe or effective for menopause symptom management or whether women are discussing these decisions with their [healthcare providers](#)—particularly in the VA, where cannabis is considered an illegal substance under federal guidelines. This information is important for healthcare providers, and more research in this area is needed," says Carolyn Gibson, Ph.D., MPH, a psychologist and health services researcher at San Francisco VA Health Care System and the lead author of the study.

The study, "Cannabis use for menopause symptom management among midlife women veterans," will be one of many presentations during the 2020 NAMS Virtual Annual Meeting focused on novel approaches for treating menopause symptoms.

"This study highlights a somewhat alarming trend and the need for more research relative to the potential risks and benefits of [cannabis use](#) for the management of bothersome menopause symptoms," says Dr. Stephanie Faubion, NAMS medical director.

Drs. Gibson and Faubion are available for interviews before and after the virtual annual meeting.

Provided by The North American Menopause Society

APA citation: Cannabis use for menopause symptom management (2020, September 28) retrieved 12 July 2022 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-09-cannabis-menopause-symptom.html>

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