

Ordena z.
Nº orden

HEZIKETA ZIKLOETARA SARTZEKO PROBA PRUEBA DE ACCESO A CICLOS FORMATIVOS

Goi Mailako Zikloak / Ciclos de Grado Superior

Atal komuna / Parte común

Ingelesa / Inglés

NAN / DNI		Izena / Nombre	
Abizenak / Apellidos			
Sinadura / Firma			

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DOES CANNABIS CURE CANCER?

For thousands of years people have used cannabis for recreational, ritualistic and medicinal purposes. In the modern era, the latter property excites a lot of people, and there is no shortage of wild claims about the supposed medical benefits of the plant. Of all the claims, perhaps the boldest is the assertion that cannabis can cure cancer.

Astounding testimonials about cannabis and its derived products that shrink tumours or cure terminal cases are easy to find on the internet. But alluring as these stories are, they tend to be based on misunderstanding, wishful thinking or outright falsehood.

Let's start by asking what the medical efficacy might be. Contrary to what most people believe, medical uses of cannabis have been widely studied. A 2017 review by the National Academy of Science looked at over 10,000 studies. They found evidence for some applications of cannabis, including managing chronic pain and spasms associated with multiple sclerosis. There was also good evidence that tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the main psychoactive ingredient in cannabis, can reduce the nausea caused by chemotherapy. Indeed, a synthetic form of THC, called dronabinol, has been prescribed for just this use for decades.

But, crucially, there is zero evidence that cannabis has any curative or even helpful impact on cancer, despite enthusiastic claims to the contrary.

Why then is there such a gulf between public perception and scientific evidence? Part of this is misunderstanding. For example, an often aired claim is that high-dose THC kills cancer cells in a petri dish. This is true, but not very meaningful.

Killing cells in a dish is extremely easy; you can do so with anything from heat to bleach. But effective anti-cancer agents must be able to selectively kill cancer cells in the human body while sparing healthy ones. The reality is that cannabis simply cannot do this.

Other cannabis advocates are driven by ideological fixation, most often expressed in a sentiment that cannabis is "natural" and implicitly better than pharmacological drugs. But this is a classic example of an "appeal to nature" argument, and thus rather dubious.

Given that around half of us will be affected by cancer in our lifetime, a cure would be not only be hugely profitable, it would also garner its discoverer infinite gratitude, financial rewards and scientific honours. The idea that researchers would be callous enough to suppress a cancer cure, and the rewards that would go with it, is ludicrous.

The reality is that cancer is a complex family of disease, and it is unlikely that there will ever be a single cure. Cannabis may be useful for treating some people's nausea when undergoing chemotherapy, but we can say with confidence that the idea that it cures cancer is a myth.



QUESTIONS

1. Find in the text the words that match these definitions: (4 x 0,5 = 2 points)

1. Opposite: _____
2. a preoccupation with one subject; obsession _____
3. Questionable: _____
4. Without limits: _____

2. Say whether the following sentences are true or false and quote from the text the relevant information that justifies your answer: (3 x 1 = 3 points)

1. Cannabis is able to selectively kill cancer cells in the human body while sparing healthy ones:

2. It is certain that in the future there will be a single cure for cancer:

3. testimonials about cannabis and its derived products that shrink tumours or cure terminal cases have not been proved by science:

3. Rewrite the following sentences using the given beginning and without changing the original meaning. (2 X 1 = 2 points)

1. people have used cannabis for recreational, ritualistic and medicinal purposes:

Cannabis _____

2. there is zero evidence that cannabis has any curative impact on cancer:

No evidence _____
_____ found.

