

THC Reduces Pain in Fibromyalgia Patients

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Mannheim, Germany: Oral administration of THC significantly reduces both chronic and experimentally induced pain in patients with fibromyalgia, according to clinical trial data to be published in the June 2006 issue of the journal *Current Medical Research and Opinion*. The study is the first-ever clinical trial assessing the efficacy of cannabinoids in the treatment of fibromyalgia.

Investigators at Germany's University of Heidelberg assessed the analgesic effects of oral THC in nine patients with fibromyalgia over a 3-month period. Subjects in the trial were administered daily doses of 2.5 to 15 mg of THC, but received no other pain medication during the trial. Among those participants who completed the trial, all reported a significant reduction in daily recorded pain and electronically induced pain, investigators found.

"All patients who completed the delta-9-THC therapy ... experienced pain relief of more than 50 percent," authors concluded. Investigators recommended that follow up placebo-control trials be conducted assessing the use of cannabinoids on fibromyalgia.

Previous trials have shown that both naturally occurring and endogenous cannabinoids hold analgesic qualities, particularly in the treatment of cancer pain and neuropathic pain, both of which are poorly treated by conventional opiates.

Fibromyalgia is a chronic pain syndrome characterized by widespread musculoskeletal pain, fatigue, and multiple tender points in the neck, spine, shoulders, and hips. An estimated 3 to 6 million Americans are afflicted by the disease, which is often poorly controlled by standard pain medications.

Full text of the study, "Delta-9-THC based monotherapy in fibromyalgia patients on experimentally induced pain, axon reflex flare, and pain relief," will be available in the June 2006 issue of *Current Medical Research and Opinion*.