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Doctors to Study Effectiveness of CBD

By Fred Gardner

Tod Mikuriya, MD, did not live to see it, but his dream of investigating the medical potential of compounds in the cannabis plant other than THC is now within the grasp of his successors.

The Society of Cannabis Clinicians, the group Mikuriya founded in 1999, has drafted a "Strain Evaluation Survey" to collect data from patients who medicate with cannabis in which cannabidiol (CBD) is predominant

CBD-rich cannabis will be available at California and Colorado dispensaries by late summer —and soon thereafter, inevitably, in other states where patients can legally use cannabis as medicine.

Twelve strains rich in cannabidiol (CBD) have been identified in the year and a half since an analytic chemistry lab began testing cannabis samples provided by California dispensaries, growers, and edible makers. Buds from five of these strains have been available intermittently at Harborside Health Center in Oakland. Herbal Solutions in Long Beach also has provided CBD-rich cannabis to patients.

Eight of the CBD-rich strains are currently being grown out. The others cannot be reproduced because the growers hadn't saved or couldn't regain access to the genetic material that yielded their buds of interest.

More than 9,000 samples have been tested to date by the Steep Hill lab in Oakland. Other start-up labs in California, Colorado, and Montana have begun testing for the burgeoning industry. The Full Spectrum lab in Denver has tested some 4,500 strains and identified seven CBD-rich strains.

A strain that is roughly 6% CBD and 6% THC, "Cannatonic," has been developed by Resin Seeds in Barcelona and is being grown from seed by several collectives. Its name may be misleading, since CBD supposedly cancels the sedating effects of THC.

For purposes of the data collection being planned by the Society of Cannabis Clinicians, "CBD-rich" cannabis is being defined as more than 4% cannabidiol by weight (without respect to THC content) or more than 2.5% CBD if CBD exceeds THC.

Potential Usefulness of CBD

Until testing for cannabinoid content began, it was widely assumed that CBD, which is non-psychoactive, had been bred out of all the cannabis in California by generations of growers seeking maximum THC content.

What benefits did G.W. scientists expect a CBD-rich extract to confer?

Doctors in the SCC have watched with great interest in recent years as a British company, G.W. Pharmaceuticals conducted clinical trials of cannabis-plant extracts. G.W. has a license from the British government and backing from Otsuka, a Tokyo-based multinational.

G.W.'s flagship product, Sativex, is a plant extract that contains approximately equal amounts of CBD and THC. What benefits did G.W. scientists expect a CBD-rich extract to confer?

Various studies published in the

Why is this plant different from all other plants?



CBD-RICH CANNABIS PLANT is held lovingly by Ralph Trueblood of the Wo/men's Alliance for Medical Marijuana. It was cloned from a True Blueberry/OG Kush cross found to contain approximately 10% CBD and 6 percent THC by weight. It is known as "Blue Jay Way."

medical and scientific literature suggest that CBD could be effective in easing the symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis, diabetes, nausea, and inflammatory bowel disorders, among other difficult-to-control conditions. CBD also has demonstrated neuroprotective effects, and its anti-cancer potential is being explored at several academic research centers.

An even wider market would emerge if the reduced psychoactivity of CBD-rich cannabis makes it an appealing treatment option for patients seeking anti-inflammatory, anti-pain, anti-anxiety, and/or anti-spasm effects delivered without disconcerting euphoria or lethargy.

The Blue-Ribbon Plant

The plant richest in CBD is a "True Blueberry/OG Kush" cross grown in the mountains south of Yreka. Dried buds of TB/OGK have been sent for testing on four occasions by Harborside, the dispensary with which the breeder is associated. Samples were consistently found to contain about 10% CBD (with THC levels around 6 to 7%). On the only occasion that a crop grown outdoors by the breeder was tested by Steep Hill lab, it was found to contain 13.9% CBD.

Two other labs have confirmed the CBD content of the breeder's "Blue Jay Way."

He is now working to "stabilize the genetics" and produce TB/OGK seeds. Several plants he provided to Project CBD (a nonprofit organized by writer/activist Martin Lee to promote research) are being grown out by experienced hands. Processed medicine and clones will be available at dispensaries in the months ahead. Details will be available on ProjectCBD.com, a website that will be launched by mid-August, according to Lee.

The California strain richest in CBD proportionally, "Women's Collective Stinky Purple," tested at 9.7% CBD and 1.2% THC. It was brought to Harborside by Grower #1 who also grows a strain

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"Placeholder" Questionnaire

INTRODUCING PROJECT CBD

Our collective is involved in a research project to assess the effects of strains relatively rich in cannabidiol (more than 4% CBD). Collective members who medicate with CBD-rich cannabis are encouraged to take part in this research by reporting your observations on the back of this form

Is CBD-rich Cannabis right for you?

Research suggests that CBD could be effective in easing the symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis, diabetes, nausea, and inflammatory bowel disorders, among other difficult-to-control conditions. CBD is non-psychoactive and may counter certain effects of THC. *Patients who want the anti-inflammatory, anti-pain, anti-anxiety, or anti-spasm effects of cannabis delivered —possibly— without disconcerting euphoria or sedation might prefer CBD-rich Cannabis.*

How to conduct an N=1 Trial

A simple way to collect information about effects is called the "N-of-1" trial, in which one patient is both the test subject and the control. All you have to do is medicate with a CBD-rich strain for a set period of time —say, a week— and then medicate with your regular high-THC strain for the same period. Use this form to describe any differing effects that you notice: "less anxiety," "more stoney than I want," "less sedating," "better sleep," "no difference," etc., etc.

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS appears on front page of a form developed to involve dispensaries in data collection. Patients getting CBD-rich strains are asked to describe their dose and use pattern, as well as "Conditions/symptoms used to treat" and "Effects observed." A more detailed and formal questionnaire is being developed by the Society of Cannabis Clinicians.

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