

Category: Travail de recherche / Research work

Primary author: Nicole Andersen **Institution:** McGill University, Montreal, QC

Additional Authors:

Title: Arthritis & Cannabis Use: Evaluating Disease and Psychosocial Factors Associated With Being a Regular User

Objective(s): Both animal studies, and anecdotal reports suggest that cannabis can reduce pain, stress, and anxiety, and improve sleep in some people living with arthritis. We previously reported that Canadian adults with arthritis who used cannabis regularly also reported worse arthritis severity and arthritis symptoms (pain, fatigue) compared with people who were not regular users. This study extends these findings by evaluating associations between known arthritis flare triggers (stress, poor sleep, anxiety, and depression) and regular cannabis use.

Method(s): Data came from an online survey of health-seeking behaviors in Canadians with osteo- and inflammatory arthritis. Participants were recruited through patient arthritis organizations (Arthritis Consumer Experts, Arthritis Research Canada, etc.) and social media ads. Measures included the ISI (sleep quality), the Perceived Stress Scale, GAD-2 (anxiety), PHQ-2 (depression), and VAS (0-10) ratings of pain, fatigue, perceived arthritis activity/severity and overall health. Regular cannabis use was defined as using at least once/month for the past 3 months. Logistic regression was used to evaluate the independent effects of stress, poor sleep, low mood and arthritis symptoms (pain, fatigue) on regular cannabis use after controlling for age, education, general health, arthritis type and severity.

Result(s): The 264 participants in the study were mostly female (85%) with a mean (SD) age of 61 years (13); 72 (27%) reported regular cannabis use. Regular users did not differ from those not reporting regular use by age, education, health perceptions, arthritis type or perceived arthritis activity/severity; however, men had twice the odds of reporting regular cannabis use (Table). Worse arthritis symptoms (pain, fatigue), mood, higher stress or poorer sleep quality were not associated with regular cannabis use.

Conclusion(s): In this cross-sectional study of Canadians with arthritis, more than 1 in 4 reported regular cannabis use; men were more than twice likely to report regular cannabis use. Arthritis type, arthritis symptoms, and known flare triggers (low mood, higher stress, and poor sleep) also did not independently predict regular cannabis use. Further research is needed to better understand predictors and patterns of regular cannabis use among people with arthritis.