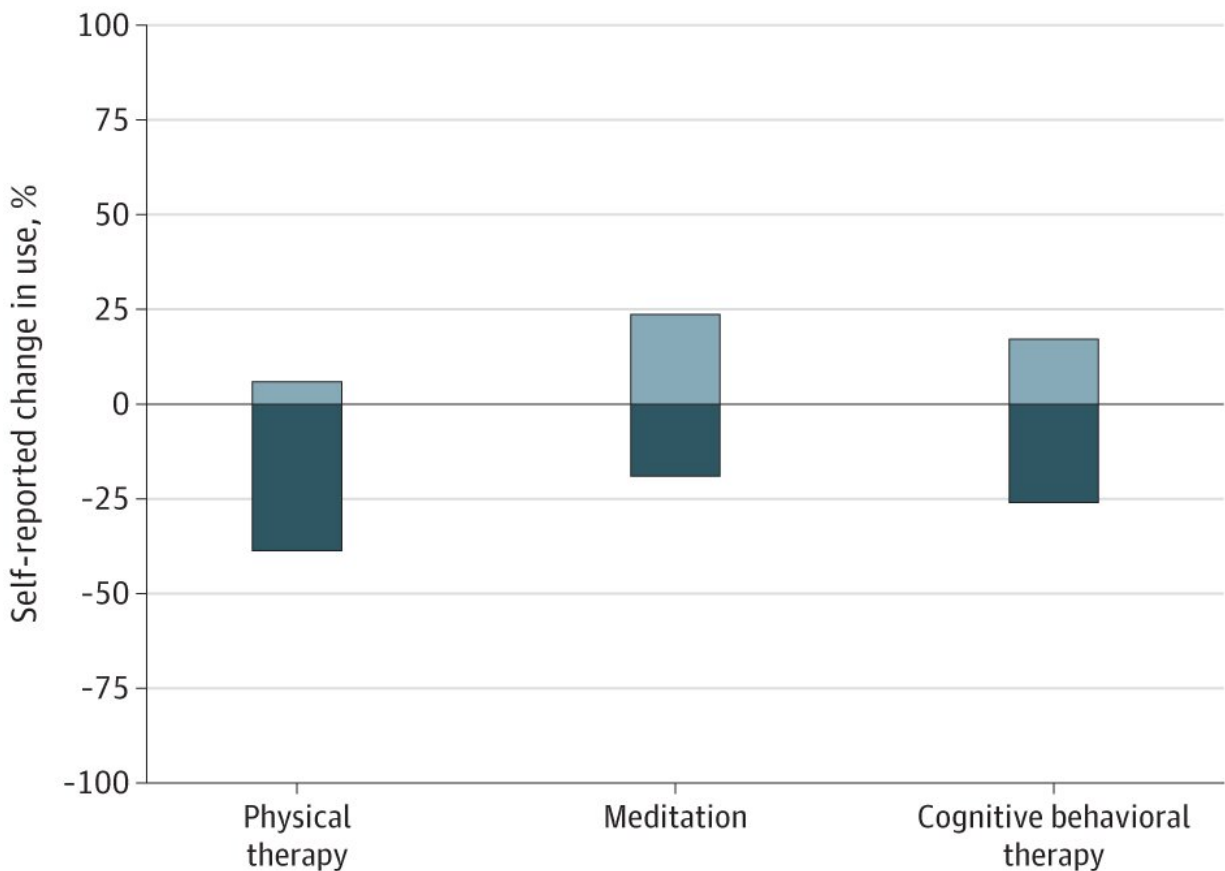


Nearly a third of people with chronic pain turn to cannabis

January 6 2023



Self-reported Change in the Use of Common Nonpharmacologic Pain Treatments Due to Cannabis Use Among US Adults Aged 18 Years or Older With Chronic Pain in March to April 2022 Measures for nonpharmacologic pain treatments were from a survey fielded from March 3, 2022, to April 11, 2022, of adults aged at least 18 years living in states with medical cannabis laws who reported having chronic noncancer pain (n = 1661), used cannabis at any time (n = 495), and who used nonpharmacologic treatments for pain (n = 362).

Respondents were asked "Has your use of cannabis to manage your chronic pain changed your use of any of the below?" with possible responses of increased, decreased, or no change. Bars signify the weighted proportion reporting an increased use or decreased use. Credit: *JAMA Network Open* (2023). DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.49797.
<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2800119>

As more U.S. states legalize cannabis (also known as marijuana) for medical and recreational use, increasing numbers of people are experimenting with it for pain relief. According to a new study published in *JAMA Network Open*, almost a third of patients with chronic pain reported using cannabis to manage it.

More than half of the 1,724 adults surveyed reported that using cannabis led them to decrease the use of pain medications, including prescription opioids and over-the-counter analgesics. Cannabis also effected the use of other non-drug related [pain relief](#) methods to various degrees: some people indicated that cannabis led them to turn less often to techniques that many clinical guidelines recommend as first-line therapies such as physical therapy and cognitive behavioral therapy, while others with chronic pain increased their use of such treatments.

"The fact that patients report substituting cannabis for pain medications so much underscores the need for research on the benefits and risk of using cannabis for [chronic pain](#)," said Mark Bicket, M.D., Ph.D., Assistant Professor in the Department of Anesthesiology and Co-Director of the Michigan Opioid Prescribing Engagement Network.

More information: Mark C. Bicket, Elizabeth M. Stone, Emma E. McGinty, Use of Cannabis and Other Pain Treatments Among Adults With Chronic Pain in US States With Medical Cannabis Programs,

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