

Position on Research into the Use of Cannabinoids for Medical Purposes

A position statement from the American Academy of Pain Medicine

The American Academy of Pain Medicine (AAPM) supports regulatory rescheduling of cannabinoids from Schedule I to Schedule II to facilitate research into the medical effectiveness, substance toxicity, and overall safety of these products for the treatment of pain. The Academy is calling for this change so that a broader assessment can be made of risks and benefits related to cannabinoids as a medical option.

Major systematic reviews on the use of cannabinoids for chronic pain have yielded conflicting conclusions regarding their effectiveness and safety.¹⁻⁷ The lack of high quality clinical research leaves both physicians and patients at a disadvantage when considering the potential risks and benefits of cannabinoids as medicine.

Additionally, the current disparity in some areas between state and federal laws relating to the use of marijuana for the delivery of cannabinoids results in these substances not being sufficiently regulated.⁸ These factors place physicians in a difficult ethical and legal position when contemplating recommending cannabinoids for their patients. Accordingly, the American Academy of Pain Medicine urges federal agencies to reschedule medical cannabis in order to encourage research leading to responsible regulation.

References:

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About AAPM

The American Academy of Pain Medicine is the premier medical association for pain clinicians and their treatment teams with some 2,000 members. Now in its 36th year of service, the Academy's mission is to advance and promote the full spectrum of multidisciplinary pain care, education, advocacy, and research to improve function and quality of life for people in pain. Information is available on the Academy's website at painmed.org.

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