**Cannabis (Marijuana) is a Safe and Effective Medicine**

Between 1840 and 1900, European and American [medical journals](http://www.opposingviews.com/arguments/cannabis-marijuana-is-a-safe-and-effective-medicine-2) published more than 100 articles on the therapeutic use of cannabis (marijuana). In the early 1900’s, pharmaceutical giant Eli Lilly was producing whole plant cannabis extract for sale to patients whose physicians recommended it. Today, new studies are being published in peer-reviewed journals that demonstrate cannabis has [medical](http://www.opposingviews.com/arguments/cannabis-marijuana-is-a-safe-and-effective-medicine-2) value in treating patients with serious illnesses such as AIDS, [glaucoma](http://www.opposingviews.com/arguments/cannabis-marijuana-is-a-safe-and-effective-medicine-2), cancer, multiple sclerosis, epilepsy, and [chronic pain](http://www.opposingviews.com/arguments/cannabis-marijuana-is-a-safe-and-effective-medicine-2). The U.S. National Library of Medicine includes more than 6,500 published scientific articles on medical applications for cannabis. Many of the isolated compounds found in the cannabis plant are being researched and used medically. In fact, Nabilone and Dronabinol, which are isolated cannabis compounds, are currently sold for medical use in the United States.

Numerous reports and studies have also attested to the safety of medical cannabis, including the LaGuardia Report of 1944, the Schafer Commission Report of 1972, a study conducted by the British House of Lords in 1997, the White House-commissioned Institute of Medicine report of 1999, research sponsored by Health Canada, and numerous studies conducted in the Netherlands, where cannabis is currently available in pharmacies. In 1988, the Drug Enforcement Administration’s (DEA) chief administrative law judge, Francis L. Young, ruled that, “Marijuana, in its natural form, is one of the safest therapeutically active substances known... It would be unreasonable, arbitrary and capricious for the DEA to continue to stand between those sufferers and the benefits of this substance.”

Opponents of medical cannabis have falsely asserted detrimental [health effects](http://www.opposingviews.com/arguments/cannabis-marijuana-is-a-safe-and-effective-medicine-2) from its consumption. However, two recent studies have debunked these claims. In 2006, UCLA researcher Donald Tashkin published a study that showed there is “no association at all” between cannabis use and [lung cancer](http://www.opposingviews.com/arguments/cannabis-marijuana-is-a-safe-and-effective-medicine-2). The study was the largest case-control study on the issue ever done, involving over 2,000 subjects. In addition, research on CD4 immunity in people living with HIV/AIDS by UCSF researcher Dr. Donald Abrams found no compromise to the immune systems of patients undergoing cannabis therapy in [clinical trials](http://www.opposingviews.com/arguments/cannabis-marijuana-is-a-safe-and-effective-medicine-2). Pharmaceutical drugs have been responsible for the deaths of thousands of patients, yet cannabis has never been found to be fatally harmful to anyone that has used it.