

Cannabis Delivery Method Usage Patterns and Preferences for Women with Chronic Pain

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INTRO

A multibillion-dollar cannabis industry has introduced high-potency products and novel delivery methods such as the e-pen vaping device. While past research indicates that males utilize more delivery methods, women's cannabis use is increasing at a higher rate, with chronic pain noted as the most common reason for use (Boehnke et al., 2019). Further, women are increasingly targeted with advertising for novel delivery methods with claims for symptom relief that may not be supported by empirical evidence. A lack of support for safety and efficacy for cannabis products may lead to unintentional harmful use by women. Also, products that may appeal to women, such as edibles, often exhibit inconsistencies and inaccuracies in product labeling regarding THC and CBD content (Cao et al., 2016; MacCoun Mello, 2015; Vandrey et al., 2015). Understanding women's cannabis usage patterns regarding delivery methods may have important implications for potential therapeutic efficacy and a better understanding of the health risks and benefits of cannabis use for women.

METHOD

Online surveys were utilized with recruitment occurring through social media sites that advertise to women with chronic pain who use cannabis. Participants ($N = 278$) were adult women (18+) in the United States with chronic pain, at least half the days for the past three months, who reported having used cannabis in the past 30 days. Descriptive statistics and chi-squared analysis were used to determine relationships between cannabis delivery method preferences.

For women with chronic pain who prefer smoking cannabis, only vaping was significant. For those who prefer vaping, all other delivery methods were significant.

Primary Preferences ($N = 278$)

Smoking (77.8%)
Edibles (54.6%)
Vaping (27.7%)
Topicals (21.5%)
Tinctures/Concentrates (19.9%)
Vaporizer (15.4%)

Smoking/Vaping

$\chi^2(1) = 6.041, p = .014$

References



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RESULTS

Of those who reported smoking, 77.8% also reported vaping, $\chi^2(1) = 6.041, p = .014$. For smoking, no other relationships were significant. Of those who reported vaping, 75% also utilized a vaporizer, tinctures (54.5%), topicals (46.4%), edibles (39.4%), and smoking (35.4%). All relationships were significant for vaping and other delivery methods.

For edibles, 77.8% also utilized vaping, vaporizer (75.0%), tinctures/concentrates (86.4%), and topicals (71.4%). For topicals, 36.1% also utilized vaping (36.1%), vaporizer (40.0%), tinctures/concentrates (54.5%), and edibles (28.2%). For tinctures/concentrates, 36.1% also utilized vaping (36.1%), vaporizer (40.0%), topicals (54.5%), and edibles (28.2%). All relationships were significant.

DISCUSSION

Results indicate that women with chronic pain are most likely to utilize smoking, and women with chronic pain who vape are most likely to utilize all other delivery methods. However, for women who did not prefer smoking and vaping, there were no significant relationships with smoking as a delivery method. Results indicate that women with chronic pain may prefer delivery methods that avoid certain inhalation hazards. Results can be used to develop future educational and intervention programs, regulate product content, and inform policy and research initiatives for women who use cannabis for chronic pain.