

Just Relax!

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO CBD

By David Ainsworth

When you consume cannabis, you might not be thinking about relatively boring effects like anti-inflammatories and sleep aids. When you partake, you might mostly think about THC, the main psychoactive component of the drug. After all, it is this element in cannabis that makes the user high and, after all this time, is probably the average person's association with weed and its brethren.

Not so fast. In addition to recreational usage, cannabis may help with other factors, such as pain and anxiety. THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) is not the only component that does this. CBD, which stands for cannabidiol, is another phytocannabinoid of the drug.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), CBD is marketed in many consumer products, including foods, oils, lotions, capsules and even cosmetics. In addition, in 2018, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved Epidiolex, a medicine containing purified CBD from hemp, which can help treat rare seizure disorders.

According to the CDC, hemp is any part of the *Cannabis sativa* plant that contains no more than 0.3 percent of THC.

"What makes it different is genetic capability of the plant to produce a particular type of cannabinoid in the plant," says Strat Noller, professor emeritus at Oregon



State University and founder and former director of the Global Hemp Innovation Center. He adds that in order to be compliant in the United States, hemp must have about 20 to 23 times more CBD than THC.

CBD does not make a user high. But, according to many users, it can help with relaxation, reduce anxiety and other factors. Some methods for ingesting CBD include edibles, such as gummies, tinctures and, of course, smoking cannabis. When smoking, CBD is often combined with THC, as many want that "high" effect that comes with THC. However, CBD can be effective by itself as well.

"What CBD does, from what we've found, is mostly anti-inflammatory," says Galen Huber, the manager

of Apothca in Eugene. "So, it works comparatively like ibuprofen."

CBD's anti-inflammatory effects can be used by some as a sleep aid.

"It can promote sleepiness," says Cory Winder, one of the managers at Next Level Wellness in Eugene. "But it is further promoting sleepiness by relaxing your muscles and further just allowing your body to alleviate stress." He added that another cannabinoid, CBN, has a more direct effect on helping people sleep.

When paired together, CBD and THC produce what is called an entourage effect. This consists of positive effects that people experience from the mixing of various compounds in cannabis. In this case, the combination of CBD's anti-inflammatory effects and THC's psychoactive high can help people relax. This entourage effect, in turn, can help improve sleep.

"They can then handle something like social stresses a little easier," Huber says. He adds that a healthy balance of CBD and THC can help him prevent panic attacks.

CBD's effects may not happen all at once, though. According to Melissa Lieberman, assistant manager of Holy Grail Pharms in Eugene, CBD will always work best when used over time.

"It might not be instant results," Lieberman says. "But, if you give it a week and consistently use it, it should definitely start to help." She added that if people don't want to use THC in combination with CBD, she recommends using CBN (cannabinol) with CBD as a substitute for helping improve sleep. Unlike CBD, CBN can be mildly psychoactive.

Huber often takes CBD and THC combined, but he takes a break every year to "cleanse" his tolerance of THC and smokes only CBD. He may not get that high, but he still feels satisfaction.

"It's a ritual, and I love that ritual," he says of smoking the CBD flower.

CBD is not without its risk factors, though. According to the CDC, some potential harms and side effects include liver damage, interference with other drugs, drowsiness or sleepiness, diarrhea, changes in appetite and changes in mood. More research needs to be done to examine CBD's effects, both positive and negative. ■

slant

• **Happy Easter! Happy Passover! Ramadan Mubarak!** And for those of you less religiously inclined, there's two more celebrations on the horizon. As you might be able to tell from the ads in this issue, 4/20, the annual festival of cannabis, is nigh. And two days after that, on April 22, it's Earth Day. Nothing says springtime in Oregon like celebrating new growth and the smell of skunk.

• **For you aficionados of the visual arts:** Two terrific shows are in galleries on Willamette Street. Jon Jay Cruson's geometric landscapes are shown in the White Lotus Gallery until May 20. Across the street in the Karin Clarke Gallery you can enjoy Rick Bartow's wild and wonderful work until May 13. **For those of you who turn to music for distraction from a rainy spring:** Nellie McKay, whose songs should be familiar to *Grey's Anatomy* fans, plays The Shedd Saturday, April 15, and for you activist types, don't miss the Eugene Peace Choir and Raging Grannies in a benefit for Hope & Peace Alliance (formerly Womenspace) Monday, April 17, at Whirled Pies. Find out more about these events in *Eugene Weekly's* What's Happening Calendar, in this issue and online.

• **Scam alert!** We've seen average citizens and former mayors alike falling for a weird social media

scam where someone posts a photo of a lost or injured dog and says it has no chip and needs to find its owners. Folks share and reshare without checking to see if there really is a lost dog. Social media pro-tip: Confirm before you share! In this case, check the poster's profile, are they new to the group they are posting in and have never posted before? Suspicious. If you click through to their own social media page, is there basically just a photo and no posts? Also suspicious. According to the Better Business Bureau, these are often bait-and-switch scams where after it's been shared, the poster changes the link to a deceptive rental ad or some other way to trick folks out of money.

• **The editorial board of *The Oregonian*, on Sunday, April 9, laments in a piece called "Oregon is dealt a blow," that 16,000 more people left Oregon than moved in from July 2021 to July 2022.** First, let's just be glad the O has an editorial board, since *The Register-Guard* no longer does, and second, is population decline really that bad a thing? The issues writers attribute it to such as homelessness and housing costs are hugely troubling and must be rectified, but to the folks who loudly proclaim they are leaving because we care about public health, gun control, public education and LGBTQIA rights? We hear Florida is nice this time of year.

• **We note with sadness the loss of two Oregon arts leaders in April.** Here in Eugene, Royce Saltzman died on April 3; he was 94, and had suffered from cancer. As a professor at the University of Oregon

School of Music, Saltzman met the brilliant German choral conductor and Bach expert Helmuth Rilling. In 1970 the two men put together a summer music festival in Eugene that became the internationally known, Grammy-winning Oregon Bach Festival under Saltzman's congenial administration. In Portland, painter Henk Pander died April 7 of brain cancer at the age of 85. Born in the Netherlands, where as a child he experienced Nazi bombing raids — a trauma that informed the paintings he made for decades after — Pander might be best known for his revolutionary official state portrait of then-Gov. Tom McCall in 1982. Instead of the stiff mugshot that governors usually get, Pander painted McCall standing on an Oregon beach, holding out a hand in greeting, one foot in the water, the other on the beach — marking one of McCall's signature achievements, the Oregon Beach Bill. Saltzman and Pander both made Oregon a better place.

• **Pondering your May ballot? Well, you should be, because with issues like jail support and school board elections on the ballot, this off-year election has some big decisions at stake.** You must be registered to vote by April 25, the election is May 16 and your ballot gets mailed May 2. City Club of Eugene will discuss the jail levy at noon this Friday, April 14. The measure would extend the levy at the same rate: 55 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value at a cost to the average homeowner of about \$118 a year. Speakers include Sheriff Cliff Harold in support and Jacob Trewe of Healing Not Handcuffs in opposition. More at CityClubofEugene.org.