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## News

### Cannabis spray eases pain, study finds

**Cancer patients could benefit from a new painkiller made from cannabis extract, a study has shown.**

The oral spray reduced pain by 30 per cent in a group of cancer patients who had not been helped by morphine or other medicines, researchers found.

The team at the University hope that the treatment could be used alongside traditional painkillers in future.

### Promising results

Researchers tested the cannabis-based medicine in 177 patients over a two-week period.

The 30 per cent reduction in pain reported by patients is viewed by doctors as a significant improvement in their quality of life.

Researchers say the spray works by activating molecules in the body called cannabinoid receptors.

When triggered by cannabis, these receptors can stop nerve signals being transmitted from the site of pain to the brain.

The medical spray has been developed so that it does not affect the mental state of the patient, in the way normally associated with cannabis consumption.

These early results are very promising. Prescription of these drugs can be very useful in combating debilitating pain, but it is important to understand the difference between their medical and recreational use.

**Professor Marie Fallon**

*St Columba's Hospice Chair of Palliative Medicine*

The authors warn, however, that the results do not support the recreational smoking of cannabis, which can increase risk of cancer.

The research is published in the Journal of Pain and Symptom Management.

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