

New Human-Based Study Into the Pain Reduction Effects of CBD

The results of a new study performed at Syracuse University has been published in the *Experimental and Clinical Psychopharmacology* journal. This new research looked into the ability of CBD to reduce pain in human test subjects, as well as how much of the placebo effect impacted the trials.

The team that led this study include:

Martin De Vita, from the psychology department
Stephen Maisto, Emeritus Psychology professor
Dezarie Moskal, lab member and doctoral candidate

In their review of other experimental clinical trials that assessed the ability of CBD to reduce the intensity of pain, there was no proof that CBD reduced pain intensity in experimental trials, but it did appear to make the pain “less unpleasant”.

In the new study, they used specialized equipment that would increase heat to safely cause pain from the heat. They would give the human subjects either a pharmaceutical-grade [CBD oil](#) drug or a placebo, and then measure how their nervous system responded to different levels of pain. Their hypothesis going into this experiment was that they would mostly find that any pain relief was primarily due to the placebo effect.

The placebo effect refers to a phenomena observed long ago by medical researchers that you can give a person a non-effective “drug”, such as a sugar pill, and the person will feel certain effects depending on what you tell them the drug does. For example, if you give them a placebo and tell them it reduces pain, they will actually physically feel some pain reduction. There is an expected range of effect that is taken into account by any clinical research, and as a result all research uses a blind placebo group and confidence threshold that the real drug being studied has to surpass.

The result of the new Syracuse University study was actually a mix of both. According to Martin De Vita: “we found improvements in pain measures caused by the pharmacological effects of CBD and the psychological effects of just expecting that they had gotten CBD.” More specifically, they found that the pain responses measured during the study was different if it was someone who received the CBD drug or someone who received a placebo.

Those who had the placebo effect fell within the expected range for the phenomena. However, the CBD was able to alter how the pain was received in a way that made it less unpleasant, even if it did not reduce the intensity of pain itself. Their early conclusions were that pain should not be thought of in a black-and-white manner. There are degrees and types of pain that matter as well, to

the point where you can make someone who is experiencing pain more comfortable by shifting the channels that the pain responses are sent through.

The important note is that this study used pure CBD isolate oil. That means that it did not include any other cannabinoids, which is important to consider as far as how much CBD is able to reduce pain. There is such a thing as the entourage effect, where having multiple cannabinoids together helps boost their potency and properties more than if you take them separately.