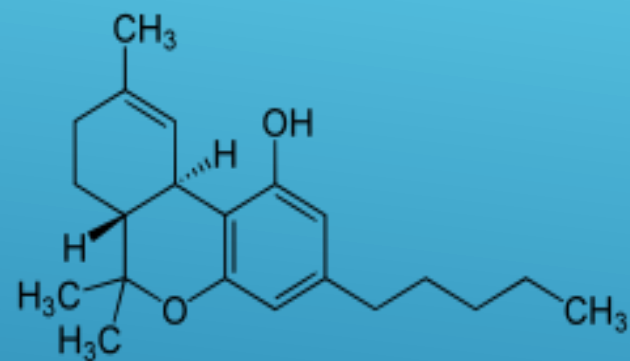
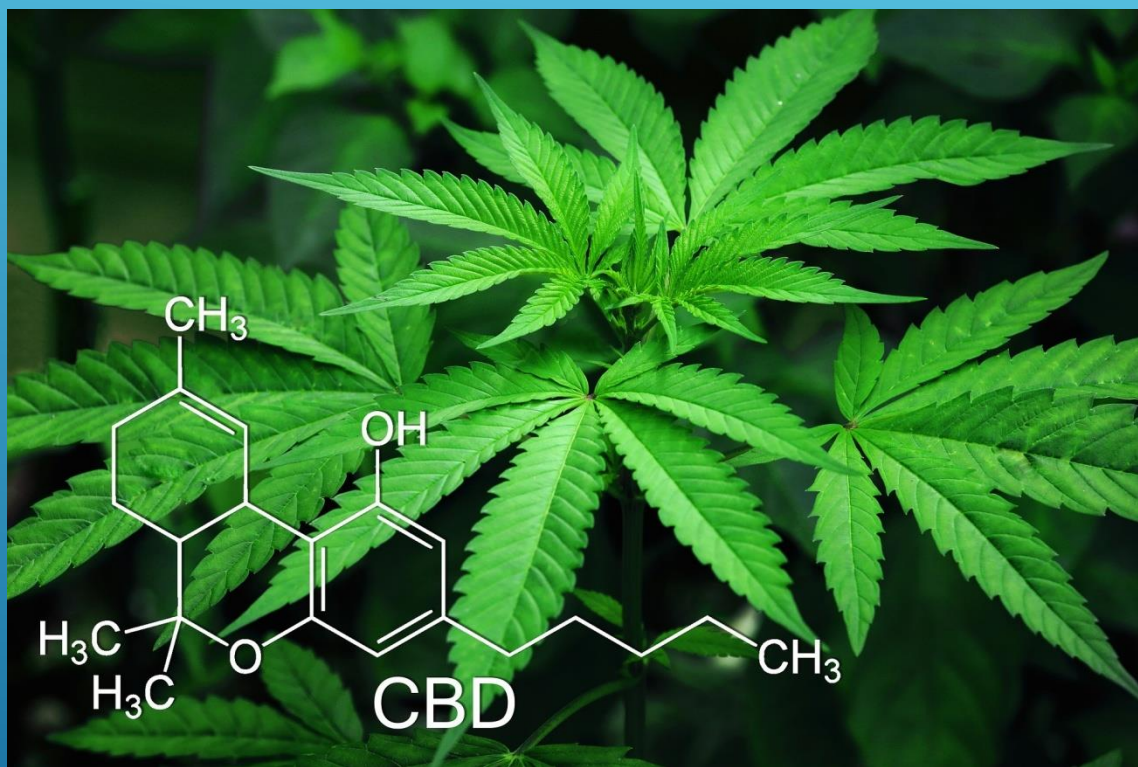


# NORDIC SPECIALIST COURSE IN PALLIATIVE MEDICINE 2019

Project: **Self-reported cannabis use in patients referred to The Palliative Care Unit at a University Hospital in Copenhagen.**

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# CANNABIS




**THC**


# INTRODUCTION

- ✓ Cannabis products for recreational and medical purposes has attracted increasingly attention in the general population in many countries
- ✓ The public, social media and firms have increased pressure on politicians to get access to cannabis in a legal way
- ✓ In some countries cannabis is legalized. Most cannabis products for medical purposes have bypassed usual drug regulatory procedures and therefore have no leaflet
- ✓ January 1, 2018 Danish doctors were permitted by law to prescribe medical cannabis


# INTRODUCTION

- ✓ This law and the fact that we knew some of our patients used cannabis made me want to investigate the intake more systematically
  - ✓ New patients would often ask about cannabis, seek the doctors advice about the use and the effects
  - ✓ In the case we included patients in our team we would like to know, if cannabis were used due to possible interactions with other drugs
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# MATERIALS AND METHODS

- ✓ The Unit covers an area of 5-600.000 inhabitants
  - ✓ 600 patients are referred to the Unit per year
  - ✓ All newly referred and visited patients in a prespecified period of time
  - ✓ A prespecified questionnaire was made and used by all doctors in the team
  - ✓ The study was approved by The Ehtics committee and The Danish Data Protection Agency
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# MATERIALS AND METHODS

- ✓ **Criteria for inclusion**
    - ✓ All patients referred to Specialist Palliative Care Unit
  - ✓ **Criteria for exclusion**
    - ✓ Imminently dying
    - ✓ The patient did not want to participate in the study
  - ✓ **May first 2018 – October 31 2018**
  - ✓ **All included patients had to sign an informed consent**
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# RESULTS

- ✓ During the six months 286 patients were visited
  - ✓ Included in project: 198 (69%) patients
  - ✓ Exclusion by protocol:
    - ✓ Seven (2,4%) patients did not want to participate
    - ✓ Two (0,7%) were imminently dying
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# RESULTS

- ✓ Exclusions not allowed by protocol – 79 (27%) patients
    - ✓ No signed informed consent - 5 (1,7%) patients
    - ✓ Not able to speak Danish - 3 (1%) patients
    - ✓ Not able to hear - 1 (0,3%) patient
    - ✓ Secretary stopped project under my vacation – 7 (2,4%) patients
    - ✓ Never asked to be included in the study – 63 (22%) patients
  - ✓ Patients not invited to participate were evenly distributed over the period of inclusion
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# RESULTS

<b>Epidemiology</b>			
<b>Sex</b>	<b>Age (Years)</b>	<b>Diagnose</b>	<b>Abuse</b>
<b>Female 93 (47%)</b>	<b>Mean 67,3</b>	<b>Cancer 165 (83%)</b>	<b>Never 163 (82%)</b>
<b>Male 105 (53%)</b>	<b>Median 68</b>	<b>Other 33 (17%)</b>	<b>Former 28 (14%)</b>
	<b>Range 27-92</b>		<b>Currently 7 (4%)</b>

# RESULTS

Cannabis questionnaire results			
Cannabis		Type of cannabis	
Yes	50 (25%)	THC	16 (32%)
No	148 (75%)	CBD	28 (56%)
		Dronabinol	7 (14%)
		Marinol	1 (2%)
		Other	15 (30%)

# RESULTS


## Cannabis questionnaire results

Why do you take cannabis?		Does it relieve symptoms?		Do you have side effects?	
Nausea	6 (12%)	Yes	19 (38%)	Yes	13 (26%)
Pain relief	20 (40%)	No	15 (30%)	No	35 (70%)
Increase of appetite	6 (12%)	Don't know	16 (32%)		
Sleep disorder	8 (16%)				
Antineoplastic effect	22 (44%)				
Other	15 (30%)				

# DISCUSSION

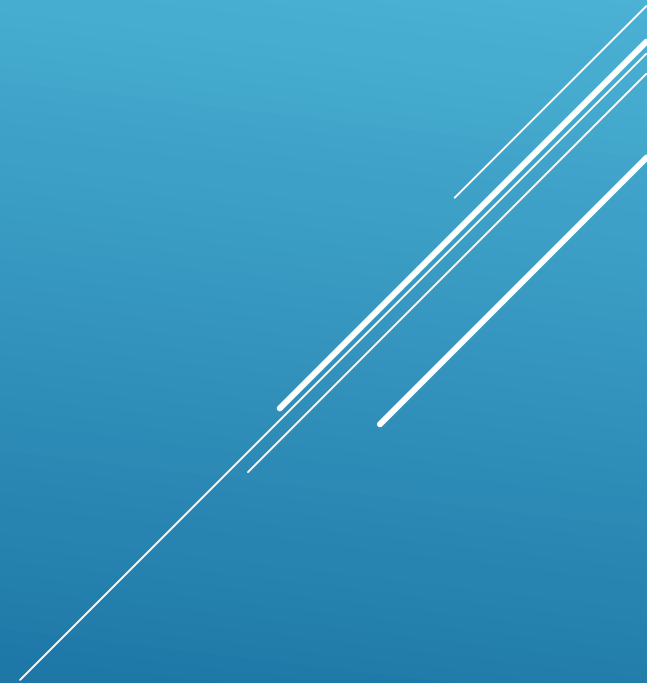
- ✓ Antineoplastic effect
- ✓ Strengths and limitations in this study
  - ✓ Prospective and consecutive in palliative patients
  - ✓ No recall bias
  - ✓ Patients were just asked, no objective measurements
- ✓ Other surveys
  - ✓ Two recently in cancer patients and 1 in chronic non-cancer pain
  - ✓ No surveys in palliative patients
- ✓ Meta-analysis
  - ✓ Chronic non-cancer pain

# CONCLUSION

- ✓ 25% used cannabis of some kind
  - ✓ Equally distributed between men and women
  - ✓ 38% had symptom relief, but not necessarily the symptom/s patients used cannabis for
  - ✓ 26% reported side effects, mainly dizziness and fatigue. Some patients had more than one side effect
  - ✓ 56% used CBD. 22% used CBD in combination with THC
- 



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION**



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