

Dreams or Reality: Evaluating Cannabis as a Sleep Aid

Research indicates that cannabis may help alleviate insomnia and aid sleep for people with certain conditions like chronic pain, PTSD, and restless legs syndrome. However, its impact on sleep quality is ambiguous. Short-term use can increase deep sleep, but THC, a component of cannabis, can decrease REM sleep, which is important for dreaming and processing emotions. This reduction in REM sleep might be beneficial for those with PTSD, who often suffer from nightmares.

There's a distinction in how cannabis affects sleep between daily and non-daily users. Daily users tend to report more sleep problems than occasional or non-users. Moreover, long-term cannabis use can lead to tolerance, requiring higher doses to achieve the same sedative effect. Heavy long-term use can negatively impact sleep quality, leading to less overall sleep, reduced deep sleep, longer time to fall asleep, and frequent awakenings. High doses of THC at night can also lead to next-day impairments like memory issues and sleepiness.

While cannabis might offer short-term sleep benefits for some individuals, its long-term use as a sleep aid is generally not recommended due to potential negative impacts on sleep quality and other side effects.

<https://www.sleepfoundation.org/sleep-aids/cannabis-and-sleep>

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