

Understanding Cannabis Behaviours and Educational Needs Among Cancer Patients

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Introduction

- Cannabis use is becoming more prevalent among both the general public and among cancer survivors.
- Given its potential interaction with other medications, impact on symptom management, and cancer outcomes, providing patients with educational materials on cannabis use is important.

Objective

To assess the educational needs and preferences of cancer patients regarding cannabis use.

Methodology

- Cancer survivors from Princess Margaret Cancer Centre (Toronto, Canada) were recruited from ambulatory outpatient oncology clinics.
- Patients completed a cross-sectional survey from July-August 2023.
- Survey questions included the following factors: socio-demographics, cannabis use, educational needs, and preferences regarding information on these behaviours in cancer care.
- Descriptive statistics helped to characterize patient responses.
- Multivariate logistic regression analysis of primary predictor variables associated with preferences for cannabis information performed via SPSS software.

Results

Figure 1. Distribution of cannabis use among cancer patients

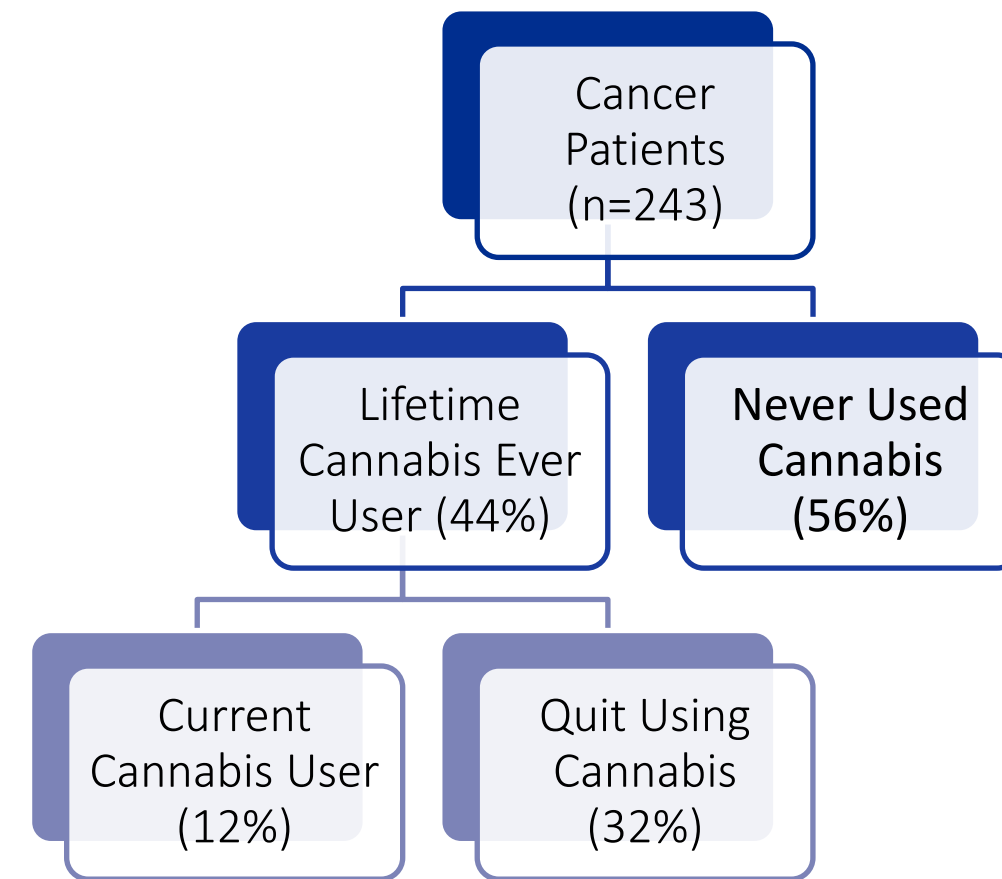


Table 2. Informational needs of cancer patients on cannabis use

Questions	Responses
Have you ever looked for information related to marijuana use in cancer care?	17% of patients have researched information
Have you ever asked your oncologist about marijuana use in cancer care?	10% of patients have asked their oncologist
Would you like more information about cannabis/marijuana use and how it affects cancer risk and treatments?	40% of patients would like more information

Table 3. Multivariate association analysis results for factors associated with looking for information about cannabis use among cancer patients.

Variables	Comparison	Multivariate Analysis	
		aOR (95% CI)	P Value
Employment	Not working full time vs Working full time	0.24 (0.09-0.61)	0.003
ECOG	1+ vs 0	3.76 (1.39-10.17)	0.009

Table 1. Participant Demographics

Variable	Subgroup	All Patients (n=243)
Age	Median (Range) in years	65 (18-100)
Gender	Female	44%
Race/Ethnicity	Caucasian/European	69%
Employment Status	Employed/Student	37%
Employment Type	White Collar Jobs	69%
Language	English	76%
Marital Status	Married or Equivalent	65%
Educational Attainment	Completed Post-Secondary	76%
Income	Greater than \$80K	52%
ECOG	0-1	89%

Table 4. Multivariate association analysis results for factors associated with asking an oncologist about cannabis use among cancer patients

Variables	Comparison	Multivariate Analysis	
		aOR (95% CI)	P Value
Age	Per 1 year Increase	0.95 (0.92-0.98)	0.001
Race	Non-Caucasian vs Caucasian	0.22 (0.06-0.83)	0.026

Table 5. Multivariate association analysis results for factors associated with wanting information about cannabis use among cancer patients

Variables	Comparison	Multivariate Analysis	
		aOR (95% CI)	P Value
Age	Per 1 Year Increase	0.98 (0.96-1.00)	0.019
Race	Non-Caucasian vs Caucasian	2.60 (1.31-5.13)	0.006

Table 6. Cancer patients' preferred informational format for cannabis resources

In what format would you like this information? (Select all that apply)	Responses
Written (e.g. Pamphlets)	53%
Online (e.g. Websites)	51%
Online Videos	15%
Social Media	13%
In-Person Sessions	26%

Conclusions

- Despite increasing use of cannabis among both the general public and cancer survivors, most cancer patients have not researched for cannabis information on their own.
- Most cancer patients have also not asked their physicians about cannabis use in the context of their cancer care.
- However, many patients are interested in receiving educational material for cannabis content in online or written formats
- Younger age is associated with both asking their oncologist about information on cannabis and wanting more information on cannabis and cancer care
- Patient educational materials for cannabis use in cancer care are recommended to be developed as online or written formats while incorporating culturally appropriate elements.