

# Medical Cannabis Treatment

"There must be more options for me to treat my chronic pain other than the medications I am taking. I am concerned about the side effects and the long term consequences."

"I have been through cancer, surgeries, and chronic illness. When I had the opportunity to try a very small dose of cannabis medicine, I felt a sense of relief and comfort I haven't felt for many years."

"I am a therapist working with clients who suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. I want to understand if cannabis medicine can help them."

"Parkinson's Disease causes me almost constant hand tremors. With one inhalation of cannabis, my tremors calm, I feel relaxed, and I can use my hands again."



These are some of the experiences I heard expressed at a recent public talk I facilitated to discuss medical cannabis. Eager to learn about how cannabis medicine works in the human body, there was hope and encouragement shared. There were also concerns at the obstacles that some were encountering when trying to include this medicine into their plans of care.

Currently more than 7000 patients are served by the Therapeutic Cannabis Program in New Hampshire. There is a wide range of conditions being treated. The most frequent reason for using cannabis medicine is chronic pain. Other conditions include cancer, post traumatic stress disorder, spinal cord injury and disease, muscle spasms, seizures, Crohn's Disease, Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson's, Lupus, HIV/AIDS, Alzheimer's, severe nausea and vomiting, loss of appetite due to chemotherapy, and more. Though there are obstacles to access, and research needed to better understand and utilize cannabis as medicine, we are fortunate for the great progress being made on all fronts.

A 2018 survey asked New Hampshire therapeutic cannabis patients to rate improvement of wellness and quality of life. On a scale of 1 (very much) to 5 (not at all), of those who responded, 85 percent rated their improvement as 1 or 2. Of 717 patients responding to the question: "Have you been able to reduce the amount of prescription medication you take since becoming a patient of the ATC (Alternative Treatment Center/medical cannabis dispensary)?" 41 percent were able to discontinue some prescriptions, 27 percent most prescriptions, and 16 percent all prescriptions.

Science is showing us how this is possible as we learn about the Endocannabinoid System (ECS) in our bodies. These chemical signals and receptors made naturally in our bodies regulate many biological functions, affecting physical and mental health. Their primary task is safeguarding stability in constantly changing external and internal influences. When an imbalance is detected within, the body creates "endocannabinoids" – naturally occurring substances that work to return the physiological process back to "homeostasis" – balance and healthy stability.

The active compounds found in the cannabis plant are biologically complementary and supportive to this system in our body. This is why cannabis can be beneficial to so many conditions and symptoms. Research is revealing the theory that deficiencies in the Endocannabinoid System may be involved in diseases that have been difficult to treat and heal. By treating the ECS with the use of cannabis, we can support the healing process.

Another benefit of cannabis medicine is its safety profile. Though there are some situations where we must be cautious with the use of cannabis, it is generally a very safe medicine, without dangerous side effects or life-threatening potential for overdose. Cannabis medicine can often be very effective at surprisingly low doses. There are a variety of ways that the medicine can be taken – inhalation, liquid extracts, edibles, and topicals, such as creams, salves, and patches.

To learn about the medical conditions that qualify a patient for therapeutic cannabis in New Hampshire, and for information about how to apply, go to the website for New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services - Therapeutic Cannabis Program or speak to your doctor or nurse-practitioner.

A healthcare provider trained in cannabis medicine helps a patient determine whether cannabis is an appropriate therapy for their condition, which forms would be best, educates on optimal dosing, reviews other prescription medications for any possible interactions, and supports the patient's overall plan of care. Medical cannabis works best with education as part of a holistic, integrative approach to healing.

*Nadine Hottat is an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse and Certified Nurse Midwife. She is trained in cannabis therapeutics and is a member of the American Cannabis Nurses Association. Her practice – Enlighten Women's Health – focuses on integrative approaches to women's health care. She also consults with individuals and groups to provide guidance and education for use of therapeutic cannabis. To contact Nadine, email nadine@wiseflower.net.*

# Art A La Carte Kids Class In Keene

Art a la Carte classes are for kids ages 18 months to seven years. The class will be at MoCo Arts in Keene on Thursday, February 21st from 11:15 to 11:45 a.m.. Each class offers a unique activity ranging from theatre to dance to music to puppetry. These drop-in classes are \$5 class. No registration required. For more details, visit [www.moco.org](http://www.moco.org), email [info@moco.org](mailto:info@moco.org), or call 603-357-2100.

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All are welcome...  
Come as you are!

**FUN FACTS about DR. HOWARD YEN:**

1. He attended the University of Pennsylvania
2. He grew up in Taiwan
3. He is SUPER excited to be part of the Monadnock Region

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# HCS Names Mary Lucas Castle Center Administrator

Mary Lucas RN, has been named nurse administrator for the Castle Center Life Enrichment Day Program at Home Healthcare, Hospice and Community Services (HCS). Lucas received her LPN from the Thompson School of Practical Nursing and her RN from Vermont Technical School, both in Brattleboro, VT. She has a wide range of experience in elder care, including providing care in an Alzheimer's unit at a local nursing home. For the past 19 years she has held several positions at HCS, most recently as supervisor of the licensed nurse assistant (LNA) program.

As nurse administrator, Lucas is overseeing all aspects of the Castle Center's care, including health monitoring and therapeutic activities. She has also instituted a new series for caregivers called "HCS Care Talks" to support family caregivers in the community.

The Castle Center Life Enrichment Day Program, located at 312 Marlboro Street in Keene, is a licensed, medical adult day care center open to all seniors in the area who may need assistance during the day. The Castle Center, a Monadnock United Way agency, is open Mondays through Fridays from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For more details, call Susan Ashworth at 603-352-2253.

**Free Gourmet Dinner**  
Immediately following our free seminar, entitled  
*"Stress, Hormones & Health"* (The true cause of BELLY FAT)

**Country Life Restaurant**  
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You will learn how Hormone Imbalances can affect your sleep cycles, carbohydrate cravings, and fat burning - Why "Counting Calories" doesn't work for belly fat - Learn the Biggest Mistake that people make with Exercise that prevents weight loss - WHAT REALLY WORKS for permanent loss of belly fat and bulges. Safely. Healthfully!  
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