

Press release

## **Medical cannabidiol (CBD) and cannabis: Promising new possibilities for women's health**

*Frankfurt/Main, March 7, 2022* – It goes without saying that the female body is fundamentally different to the male body. This means that women have specific health-related challenges, such as premenstrual syndrome (PMS), menopause, or endometriosis, a common inflammatory abdominal condition. Many women suffer from long-term symptoms, such as pain, infections, depression, and insomnia.

### **New approaches in women's health – How exactly do medical cannabidiol (CBD) and cannabis work?**

In recent years, new approaches have been developed to improve the quality of life of affected women focusing on the use of medical cannabis. It has been proven that active substances derived from the hemp plant have anti-inflammatory effects, relieve pain, and improve sleep quality.<sup>1, 2</sup> Despite being one of the oldest medicinal plants, medical cannabis was only approved for use in Germany in 2017 and requires a prescription. Research into medical cannabis focuses on two active substances: Cannabidiol (CBD), a phyto-cannabinoid from the female hemp plant, and tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). "Alongside THC, the medical field is especially interested in CBD, as it is considered to be a non-psychoactive cannabinoid. CBD has a relaxing effect and helps control cramps, inflammation, anxiety, and nausea," explains Dr med. Julian Wichmann, a doctor experienced in this field and Managing Director of Algea Care, the first and leading Germany-wide platform for telemedicine-supported and evidence-based medical treatment with medical cannabidiol (CBD) and cannabis.

Doctors are already using medical cannabis in the field of women's health. Dr Gudrun Lorenz-Eberhardt, Specialist for Gynecology and Obstetrics, says: "We can make good use of the positive properties of the active substances contained in the cannabis plant in the field of women's health. Cannabis is a natural medicinal plant that makes a non-hormonal course of treatment possible. This has been met with a high level of acceptance by women." Dr Lorenz-Eberhardt, who obtained her doctoral degree and completed her specialization in gynecology and obstetrics at the Karl-Franzen University Hospital in Graz, Austria, has been involved in the use of medical cannabidiol (CBD) and cannabis at her specialist practice for gynecology and women's health since 2017.

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<sup>1</sup> Mistry, M., Simpson, P., Morris, E., Fritz, A. K., Karavadra, B., Lennox, C., & Prosser-Snelling, E. (2021). Cannabidiol for the Management of Endometriosis and Chronic Pelvic Pain. *Journal of Minimally Invasive Gynecology*, 11(1), Online-Vorveröffentlichung.

<sup>2</sup> Slavin, M. N., Farmer, S., & Earleywine, M. (2016). Expectancy mediated effects of marijuana on menopause symptoms. *Addiction Research & Theory*, 24(4), 322-329.

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## **Studies have suggested that CBD and cannabis may have a positive effect in the treatment of endometriosis**

Medical cannabis can play a significant role in the treatment of endometriosis, a common inflammatory abdominal disorder - which is important considering how common the disease is: According to the Endometriosis Association Germany e.V., 8 to 15 percent of all women between puberty and menopause are affected, and there are up to 40,000 new cases annually in Germany. The disease is caused by the development of tissue similar to uterine mucosa outside of the uterus. This can lead to chronic and painful inflammation, scarring, adhesions, abdominal cavity hemorrhaging, and even infertility. The Endometriosis Association Germany estimates that 40 to 60 percent of all involuntarily childless women suffer from endometriosis.

Studies have suggested medical cannabis has a positive effect on endometriosis. In an online survey<sup>3</sup> of 484 Australian women with endometriosis aged between 25 and 36 on self-applied strategies, 13 percent reported using medical cannabis to relieve their symptoms. The study participants reported that the use of medical cannabis led to significant symptom relief, improved gastrointestinal problems, anxiety, depression, and promoted sleep. Those surveyed also reported that the use of medical cannabis reduced the need for other types of pain medication.

A review<sup>4</sup> on the efficacy of endometriosis treatment using CBD and THC concluded that both active substances influence the endocannabinoid system and, across all studies, anti-inflammatory and pain-relieving effects were observed. The endocannabinoid system is part of the nervous system and plays a central role in the treatment of endometriosis using medical cannabis. A further study<sup>5</sup> stated that the current data points to the potentially pain-relieving effects of medical cannabis with negligible adverse effects such as fatigue, dry mouth, and eye irritation.

## **Medical cannabis to relieve symptoms associated with menopause**

In contrast to endometriosis, menopause is of course not a disease, but rather a phase in a women's life during which the female sex hormones progesterone and estrogen change, which can lead to symptoms such as hot flashes, sleep disorders, or restlessness. Whether and to what extent women experience menopausal symptoms varies greatly. One third of all women have no or very few menopausal problems<sup>6</sup>. By implication, this means that two thirds of

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<sup>3</sup> Sinclair, J., Smith, C. A., Abbott, J., Chalmers, K. J., Pate, D. W., & Armour, M. (2020). Cannabis use, a self-management strategy among Australian women with endometriosis: results from a national online survey. *Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology Canada*, 42(3), 256-261.

<sup>4</sup> Bouaziz, J., Bar On, A., Seidman, D. S., & Soriano, D. (2017). The clinical significance of endocannabinoids in endometriosis pain management. *Cannabis and Cannabinoid Research*, 2(1), 72-80.

<sup>5</sup> Mistry, M., Simpson, P., Morris, E., Fritz, A. K., Karavadra, B., Lennox, C., & Prosser-Snelling, E. (2021). Cannabidiol for the Management of Endometriosis and Chronic Pelvic Pain. *Journal of Minimally Invasive Gynecology*, 11(1), Online-Vorveröffentlichung.

<sup>6</sup> Apotheken Umschau <https://www.apotheken-umschau.de/krankheiten-symptome/erkrankungen-der-weiblichen-geschlechtsorgane/wechseljahre-beginn-symptome-hilfe-bei-beschwerden-736281.html#symptome>.

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women will face a diverse range of challenges during the menopause. This can severely disrupt their everyday life and sense of well-being. Hormone replacement therapy can be used to treat the symptoms; however, this is not without controversy. Cannabis therapy is a possible non-hormonal alternative as, according to a study, cannabinoids can have a positive effect on menopausal symptoms. An online survey<sup>7</sup> of 115 women found that medical cannabis has the potential to relieve menopausal symptoms.

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## **About Algea Care**

Algea Care is the nation's first and leading platform for telemedicine-supported and evidence-based medical treatment with medical cannabis. As a result of the approval of the medical use of cannabis in 2017, the company, founded in Frankfurt in 2020, has pioneered medical treatment using specific hemp components, e.g., cannabinoid oil (CBD). Algea Care is aimed at patients for whom conventional therapy was unsuccessful and who are now looking to natural medical products, such as cannabis, to treat their chronic illnesses and ailments (e.g., chronic pain, multiple sclerosis, epilepsy, Crohn's disease, depression, ADHD, sleep problems). Achieving long-term improvements in patient quality of life is the focus of the efforts of the more than 220-strong Algea Care team.

Via the website [www.algeacare.com](http://www.algeacare.com), patients can quickly and easily request treatment and - after a careful medical examination of the patient's documents - book an appointment at one of the currently 23 therapy centers in Germany. Physicians specially trained in the use of cannabis therapy and other natural medicinal products provide consultation and treatment. After the initial appointment at one of our therapy centres, all follow-up appointments, if medically justifiable, can take place as a video consultation. Using state-of-art telemedical technology, Algea Care provides patients with a comprehensive range of services: our expert team is on hand to help patients schedule appointments and compile medical histories, to offer therapy support or to answer questions on medication and other related topics.

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<sup>7</sup> Slavin, M. N., Farmer, S., & Earleywine, M. (2016). Expectancy mediated effects of marijuana on menopause symptoms. *Addiction Research & Theory*, 24(4), 322-329.