



## Is marijuana “MEDICINE”?

### There is no such thing as a “prescription” for marijuana.

- In states with laws (or proposed laws) allowing use of marijuana for medical reasons, the process of becoming an approved “patient” varies from self-identifying from a list of conditions to obtaining a doctor’s recommendation, not a prescription.
- Distribution is not through pharmacies or via licensed pharmacists.
- Marijuana does not meet the standards of a medicine and lacks the controlled research needed to identify which conditions it may be helpful for, benefits versus risks, appropriate dosage levels and safe means of administration, including controlled strength and purity.

### The American Epilepsy Society does not support marijuana use for children with seizure disorders.

- “. . . we do not know if marijuana is a safe and effective treatment for epilepsy, which is why it should be studied using the well-founded research methods that all other effective treatments for epilepsy have undergone. Such safety concerns coupled with a lack of evidence of efficacy in controlled studies result in a risk/benefit ratio that does not support use of marijuana for treatment of seizures at this time.” (*American Epilepsy Society, Position on Medical Marijuana*)
- According to Amy Brooks-Kayal, M.D., a Colorado pediatrician and president of the American Epilepsy Society, only about 30% of parents who administer medical marijuana to their children report seeing any benefits from it, and in 20% of the cases that a team from Children's Hospital in Colorado reviewed, seizures worsened with the use of cannabis oil. (*11Alive.com news story posted June 23, 2015, Atlanta (WXIA)*).

### Key medical groups oppose the legalization of marijuana as a medicine, uniformly citing the need for more research and safety concerns.

- The American Medical Association
- American Cancer Society
- National Multiple Sclerosis Society
- American Epilepsy Society
- American Glaucoma Foundation
- The American Academy of Ophthalmology
- The American Academy of Pediatrics
- The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
- The American Society of Addiction Medicine

### FDA-approved, synthetic forms of key chemicals in marijuana are currently available in all 50 states.

- Marinol and Cesamet are currently available synthetic prescription medications based on some of the chemicals found in marijuana.
- Also, a cannabis-based medicine, Sativex, is in clinical trials. This medication is derived from natural extracts from the plant.

For more information, including links to important research reports, please visit [KnowB4Uvote.org](http://KnowB4Uvote.org). We encourage you to share this fact sheet with others.