

What does high-quality evidence look like?

There is a growing amount of information available about the use of cannabis in healthcare, but it can be difficult to know if information found online, or in the media, is supported by high-quality evidence. So, what constitutes high-quality evidence?



What makes for high-quality evidence?

For evidence to be considered high quality, it must have the following features:

- Well planned⁹**
Carefully planned so that the results will clearly show the benefits and risks of a medicine or product
- Relevance to everyday medical practice¹⁰**
Ideally the research reflects what would happen in everyday medical practice; for example, it includes the same medication and treatments that patients would take in real life
- No other influences or biases¹¹**
Designed to make sure that the shown benefits and risks are due to the test drug or product and nothing else
- Large number of patients¹²**
The more patients in the research (sometimes thousands), the more reliable the results will be
- Ethical approval¹³**
An integral part of the research process, it aims to protect participants from the risk of harm

✓ High-quality evidence is needed to help doctors and patients make informed decisions about their care

✓ High-quality evidence is necessary for cannabis-based medicines to be approved and used in patients

Learn more > about high-quality evidence by visiting www.cannabinoieducation360.com and using our External Cannabinoid Resources links

¹Urban, J. Can Acad Child Adolesc Psychiatry 2011;20(1):57-9; ²NICE. Randomised controlled trial. 2021. Available at: <https://www.nice.org.uk/glossary?letter=r>. Accessed November 2021; ³Institute of Medicine. Improving and Accelerating Therapeutic Development for Nervous System Disorders: Workshop Summary. Washington DC: National Academies Press. 2014; ⁴Lobanovska, Pilla. Yale J Biol Med 2017;90(1):135-45; ⁵Institute for Work & Health. Observational vs. experimental studies. 2016. Available at: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/what-researchers-mean-by-observational-vs-experimental-studies>. Accessed November 2021; ⁶Sayre et al. Cureus 2017;9(8):e1546; ⁷Abu-Zidan et al. Afr Health Sci 2012;12(4):557-62; ⁸Oxford Reference. Anecdotal evidence. 2021. Available at: <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095412753>. Accessed November 2021; ⁹Erol. Noro Psikiyatir Ars 2017;54(2):97-8; ¹⁰The BMJ Opinion. Richard Smith: How to fill the void of evidence for everyday practice? 2015. Available at: <https://blogs.bmj.com/bmj/2015/08/11/richard-smith-how-to-fill-the-void-of-evidence-for-everyday-practice>; ¹¹Science News. How bias affects scientific research. Available at: <https://www.sciencenews.org/srh/s/guide/component/how-bias-affects-scientific-research>. Accessed November 2021; ¹²Sciencing. The advantages of a large sample size. 2018. <https://sciencing.com/advantages-large-sample-size-7210190.html>. Accessed November 2021; ¹³Nursing Times. Why do I have to apply for ethical approval before I can begin my research? 2011. Available at: <https://www.nursingtimes.net/roles/clinical-research-nurses/q-why-do-i-have-to-apply-for-ethical-approval-before-i-can-begin-my-research-01-08-2011/>. Accessed November 2021