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You are here: [LAT Home](#) > [Health](#)

- News
 - California | Local
 - National
 - World
 - Entertainment
 - Business
 - Sports
 - Campaign '08
 - Science
 - Environment
 - Opinion
 - Columnists
 - Print Edition
- Calendarlive
- The Guide beta
- The Envelope
- Travel
- Magazine
- Home & Garden
- Health
- Food
- Autos
- Books
- Image
- Arts & Culture
- Video
- Photography
- Blogs
- Obituaries
- Crossword, Sudoku
- All Sections
- Corrections

- Buy, Sell & More
 - Jobs
 - Cars
 - Real Estate
 - Apartments
 - Personals
 - Deals at Local
 - Stores
 - Coupons
 - Newspaper Ads

- Place an Ad
 - In the Newspaper
 - Online

- Settings & Services
 - Sign In
 - Register
 - Personalized News
 - E-Mail Newsletters
 - RSS Feeds
 - Help
 - Contact Us
 - L.A. Times Archives
 - Help
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 - Reprint Requests
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Medical marijuana and organ transplant lists

1:28 PM, May 19, 2008



The political wrangling over medical marijuana doesn't seem to be settling down and, in fact, may be about to heat back up.

The Los Angeles Times [reported](#) today that prospective organ transplant recipients were being removed from the transplant list because they'd used doctor-prescribed pot. As the story says: "Asked why the committee considered marijuana use under a doctor's supervision a history of substance abuse," a hospital spokesman cited the federal law categorizing marijuana as an illegal drug."

Earlier this month, the White House drug czar called [attention](#) to a report linking frequent marijuana use to depression in teenagers. Some addiction experts took issue with that conclusion, suggesting it may have overstated the evidence, although depression does seem to be a risk factor for drug use.

These stories aside, if the debate over medical marijuana is *not* about to heat back up, it should. People are confused and in limbo, and the information from both sides is distrusted.

For a broad discussion of the issue and, most interestingly from a health standpoint, an evaluation of the potential risks and benefits, check out [Medical Marijuana ProCon.org](#).

(The site includes this statement: "Note: We do not provide referrals to or recommendations of marijuana dispensaries, cannabis clubs, physicians, or attorneys although we do reference them on this website.")

-- Tami Dennis

Photo by Kevin P. Casey / For The Times, of Jonathan Simchen, a diabetic and medical marijuana user, who was removed from a Seattle hospital's transplant program.

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What an excellent article. The fact i.e. TRUTH is exactly as said, "People are confused and in limbo, and the information from both sides is distrusted." Except for the patients who from personal experience know the medically therapeutic effects of Cannabis. Even England's Virgin Queen used a tincture of Cannabis and Alcohol to control pain from menstrual cramps. I use it to control the waves of nausea I surf from mild to severe every hour of everyday due to Diabetic

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Our Bloggers

- Tami Dennis**
Tami Dennis, who takes the word "skeptical" to previously uncharted territory, is editor of The Times' Health section. She's adamant that pitches promoting awareness days, weeks or months are, by their nature, non-stories. And, because she's an adult, she refuses to use words like "veggies," "tummy" and "yummy."
- Rosie Mestel**
Rosie Mestel, Health section deputy editor, studied genetics before abandoning flies, fungi and DNA for health/medical writing. Her hero is the biologist [Ernst Haeckel](#), whose jellyfish paintings inspired snazzy chandeliers. Her favorite toast-spread is Marmite, a British delicacy made of yeast extract. Her least-favorite word is "millenniums."

- Susan Brink**
Susan Brink has made health and medicine her beat for 26 of her 28 years in the business. She's covered a wide range of disease and health policy stories, and is always on the lookout for fresh angles. Few things make her happier than busting through preconceived notions to give readers an accurate view of people behaving as...well, real people.

- Janet Cromley**
Janet Cromley never met a wacky health or fitness topic she didn't like. In her more than 15 years at The Times, she has written about everything from prison nurses to the sex life of grunion, neither of which made for good family reading. She holds a masters degree in counseling psychology, something that comes in very handy when handling reluctant sources and explaining to pitchers why a bunion isn't a story.

