

THE DAILY BRIEFING

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News 4 Investigates: Medical Marijuana

Mark Pedersen has been called the "["best pothead"](#)" in St. Louis. He would prefer to be known as a "cannabis patient." Pedersen is the founder of the [Cannabis Patient Network](#), a web-based collection of information assembled by Pedersen. The CPN is his effort to educate people about the medical benefits of marijuana.

The St. Louis County activist has traveled across the country interviewing patients. Some of them are legal patients who have prescriptions for marijuana sold by approved vendors in the [thirteen states](#) where it is legal. Other patients are using it illegally in states that consider possession a crime. It's illegal to possess cannabis in Missouri and Illinois.

The biggest argument for using cannabis is that it has value as a medicine. Cannabinoids have antioxidant properties, which can be useful in treating certain diseases like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's. The details are contained in a [United States Patent](#) issued six years ago.

Clearly, [medical marijuana](#) remains controversial. Critics argue there are enough drugs on the market that can be used to treat patients without legalizing pot. And, quite frankly, although many people insist they are not using it to get high, there is always suspicion, especially among law enforcement, that some patients just want the state to approve of them getting stoned. Pedersen insists there is no prescription drug that can help ease his pain as much as cannabis. He says pills damaged his stomach and hurt his memory. Marijuana, he says, is the key to keeping him active and healthier.

Mark Pedersen is dedicating his life to this issue. He knows that his cause is also a crime in most states, but Pedersen insists the benefits of using marijuana to treat him and others are worth the risk.

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[Mark Pedersen](#) said:

Craig, Fine Blog post. Thank you.
But what happened to the interview?
Why did they cut out the science? We talked for two hours. About the Federal legal patients who for the last 30 years have been receiving cannabis from the Federal Government; we talked about the 2003 Patent that the Federal Government took out on cannabis while still arresting patients for possessing it; we talked about the close to 150 patient that I interviewed on camera who had found relief from MS, MD, ALS, Parkinson's, epilepsy, every form of cancer, etc., etc. ... And why on earth did they run that horrible clip of seemingly abusive parents blowing cannabis smoke in their child's face - before showing your interview of me? With pharmaceutical abuse among young people at an all time high, how could they possibly show that clip as a rebuttal to all we discussed?
I'm sorry, Craig, I just don't understand.

Mark Pedersen
Cannabis Patient Network

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