

## Pot for Grandma? Middle-Aged Adults Buying Weed for Ailing Parents

by [Mary Beth Sammons](#) ([Subscribe to Mary Beth Sammons's posts](#))  
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Ever think the day would come when you'd be on the way to Grandma's house with a goodie bag of marijuana?

According to a report in [The New York Times](#), middle-aged adult caregivers are coming to the rescue with cannabis to help ease a variety of ailments for their ailing elderly parents.

Age and the growing acceptance of medical marijuana are propelling adult children, who in many cases once smoked weed themselves, to supply it for their parents, according to The Times.

A 46-year-old Illinois man named Bryan (who did not give his last name since marijuana is illegal in the Midwestern state) tells The Times he started baking marijuana brownies and ginger snaps laced with the stuff to help his father with a heart ailment and his mother's dizzy spells and nausea. He says both were asking his help for their growing

fear of Alzheimer's disease and cancer.

When Bryan was a teen, he tells The Times, his parents were strictly opposed to pot.

"We would have grounded him," his mother, 72, tells The Times. "We have concerns about the law, but I would not go back to not taking the cookie and going through what I went through. Of course, if they catch me, I'll have to quit taking it."

The family is not alone. Though Illinois does not allow medical use of marijuana, 14 states, including Alaska, California and Colorado, along with the District of Columbia do, according to [MedicalMarijuana.procon.org](#) and the [Medical Marijuana Policy](#) report.

As Baby Boomers and the 40- to 50-something generation who got high as teens move into and through middle age, experts expect marijuana use to be on the rise, The Times reports. Currently, less than 1 percent of people 65 and older say they smoked marijuana in the last year, according to a 2009 survey by the federal [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) (SAMHSA).

The rate for people ages 50 to 65 who say they smoke marijuana was nearly 4 percent -- about six times higher than the 65-and-older crowd -- suggesting they were more likely to continue whatever patterns of drug use they had established in their younger years, according to the SAMHSA report. In both age groups, marijuana abuse was very low, about 1 in 800.

"I think use of medical marijuana in older people is going to be much greater in the future," [Dan G. Blazer](#), a professor of geriatric psychology at Duke University who has studied drug use among older people, tells The Times.

### Would you give your ailing parent marijuana?

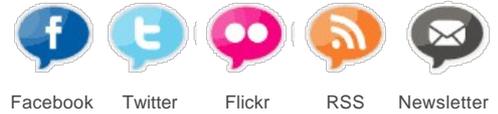
Absolutely, if it helped ease their pain.

No, it's illegal.

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Cannabinoids, the active agents in marijuana, have shown promise as pain relievers, especially for pain arising from nerve damage, [Dr. Seddon R. Savage](#), a pain specialist and president of the American Pain Society, a medical professionals' group, tells The Times.

Two cannabinoid prescription drugs are approved for use in this country, but only to treat nausea or appetite loss, according to the newspaper.

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