

Several weeks after a hysterectomy last spring, Bo Roth was suffering from exhaustion and pain that kept her on the couch much of the day. The 58-year-old Seattle speech coach didn't want to take opioid pain-killers, but Tylenol wasn't helping enough. Roth was intrigued when women in her online chat group enthused about a cannabis-derived oil called cannabidiol (CBD) that they said relieved pain without making them high. So Roth, who hadn't smoked weed since college but lived in a state where cannabis was legal, walked into a dispensary and bought a CBD tincture. "Within a few hours of placing the drops in my mouth, the malaise and achiness that had plagued me for weeks lifted and became much more manageable," she says. She took the drops several times a day and in a few weeks was back to her regular life. If you haven't been bombarded with CBD marketing or raves about it from friends, get ready. This extract-which comes from either marijuana or its industrial cousin, [cbd capsules for anxiety](#) hemp-is popping up everywhere.

[external page](#) There are CBD capsules, tinctures, and liquids for vaping plus CBD-infused lotions, beauty products, snacks, coffee, and even vaginal suppositories. Already some 1,000 brands of CBD products are available in stores-and online in states that don't have lenient cannabis laws. This is a tiny fraction of what's to come: The CBD market is poised to exceed \$22 billion by 2022, per the Chicago-based research firm Brightfield Group. The reason so many people are interested in cannabis products that don't make them high, proponents say, is that CBD helps with everything from pain and nausea to rheumatoid arthritis, cancer, Crohn's disease, and dementia. Such broad claims might sound like a snake oil sales pitch, but preliminary research does suggest that the compound may have wide-ranging effects on the body. So, is [cbd capsules for anxiety](#) the wonder product its advocates claim it is? Is it safe? And though it's available everywhere, is it even legal?

The answers are more complex than you might imagine. What is CBD, exactly? Along with its better-known counterpart, THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol, the chemical that produces the marijuana high), CBD, short for cannabidiol, is one of more than 400 compounds found in the oils of cannabis plant species, which include marijuana and hemp. Does CBD get you high? Unlike THC, CBD will not make you high. That said, this doesn't mean CBD is not at all psychoactive, as many assert, says Jahan Marcu, PhD, director of experimental pharmacology and behavior at the International Research Center on Cannabis and Mental Health in New York City: "CBD does change cognition. It affects mood, which is why people take it for anxiety. What does CBD do to the body? In addition to acting on the brain, CBD influences many body processes. That's due to the endocannabinoid system (ECS), which was discovered in the 1990s, after scientists started investigating why pot produces a high. Although much less well-known than the cardiovascular, reproductive, and respiratory systems, the ECS is critical.

"The ECS helps us eat, sleep, relax, forget what we don't need to remember, and protect our bodies from harm," Marcu says. There are more ECS receptors in the brain than there are for opioids or serotonin, plus others in the intestines, liver, pancreas, ovaries, bone cells, and elsewhere. Can CBD Oil Help Ease Anxiety? Our bodies are thought to produce endocannabinoids by the billions every day. "We always thought the 'runner's high' was due to the release of dopamine and endorphins. But now we know the euphoria is also from an endocannabinoid called anandamide," its name derived from the Sanskrit word for bliss, says Joseph Maroon, MD, clinical professor and vice chairman of neurosurgery at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. We produce these natural chemicals all day, but they fade quickly because enzymes pop up to destroy them. That's where CBD comes in: By blocking these enzymes, CBD allows the beneficial compounds to linger. This is why Amanda Oliver, 31, a career consultant in Charleston, SC, pops a CBD gummy bear each night before bed.

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