

## Case Report

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## The Role of Cannabis in Enhancing Female Sexual Desire: An Updated Integrative Review

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**ABSTRACT**

The intersection of cannabis use and women's sexual health has emerged as a compelling area of study in light of expanding legalization and shifting cultural perceptions. While female sexual desire is shaped by a complex web of hormonal, psychological, social, and relational influences, early evidence suggests that cannabis may play a role in enhancing aspects of sexual experience. This integrative review updates and reframes current findings, focusing on low- to moderate-dose consumption, possible neurobiological mechanisms, and patient-reported outcomes. Emphasis is placed on interpreting these findings in light of gaps in evidence and priorities for future research, with the goal of informing clinicians and researchers in sexual medicine.

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**Received:** July 31, 2025; **Accepted:** August 08, 2025; **Published:** August 14, 2025**Introduction**

Female sexual desire is neither fixed nor singular; it reflects a dynamic interaction between physiology, emotion, relationship context, and cultural conditioning. Low libido, a hallmark of Female Sexual Dysfunction (FSD) and hypoactive sexual desire disorder (HSDD), is frequently reported by women across age groups, yet remains poorly addressed by available treatments.

Cannabis has gained traction both as a recreational substance and as a self-managed approach to enhancing sexual experience. User narratives frequently describe increased relaxation, heightened bodily awareness, and deeper emotional engagement during intimacy. In this adapted review, we explore how cannabis may interact with the sexual response cycle and highlight where scientific evidence converges—or diverges—from these subjective accounts.

**Neurobiological and Psychophysiological Pathways**

Cannabis acts on the endocannabinoid system (ECS), a

neuromodulatory network that influences mood, reward, stress response, and sensory perception. Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the primary psychoactive cannabinoid, binds to CB<sub>1</sub> receptors in brain regions linked to sexual behavior, potentially increasing sensory acuity and lowering psychological inhibitions. Cannabidiol (CBD), a non-intoxicating compound, interacts more subtly—modulating serotonin and GABAergic activity to reduce anxiety and promote calmness.

By simultaneously easing stress and heightening sensory processing, cannabis may create conditions more conducive to sexual receptivity and desire. These effects, however, appear highly dose-dependent and variable among individuals.

**Evidence from Human Studies**

A synthesis of recent research shows mixed but intriguing patterns:

| Study                     | Sample Size  | Reported Impact                                | Desire Outcome        | Measurement Notes               |
|---------------------------|--------------|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Lynn et al., 2019         | 373 women    | Greater orgasm intensity, reduced discomfort   | Mixed                 | Self-report survey              |
| Mulvehill & Tishler, 2024 | 387 women    | Increased orgasm frequency                     | Indirect              | Focused on orgasmic dysfunction |
| National Survey, 2022     | 811 adults   | 70% of female respondents noted greater desire | Strong                | Intentional pre-intercourse use |
| Clinical Cohort, 2022     | 187 patients | Enhanced lubrication & arousal                 | No significant change | FSFI-based                      |
| Meta-Analysis, 2024       | 5 studies    | Dose-response variability                      | Dose-dependent        | Limited RCT data                |

### Limitations and Research Gaps

While the data hint at potential benefits, methodological inconsistencies abound. Variations in cannabis strain, dose, route of administration, and timing complicate cross-study comparisons. The predominance of self-reported data introduces recall and desirability bias, while standardized tools like the FSFI may overlook qualitative aspects of desire. Rigorous randomized controlled trials remain scarce, underscoring the need for better-designed investigations.

### Clinical and Practical Considerations

For women whose low desire is intertwined with anxiety, pain, or difficulty remaining present during intimacy, cannabis could serve as an adjunctive approach—provided its use is intentional, moderate, and individualized. Clinicians should assess personal health history, mental wellness, relationship factors, and substance use patterns before making recommendations.

Educational interventions on strain selection, dosing, and timing could empower women to make informed decisions that minimize risk and maximize potential benefit.

### Conclusion

Cannabis presents a potentially valuable, albeit underexplored, tool in addressing aspects of female sexual desire. Its role appears more supportive than directly aphrodisiac, enhancing conditions that foster desire rather than initiating it outright. Future research should prioritize dose-response clarity, controlled clinical settings, and deeper exploration of psychosocial moderators.

### References

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