

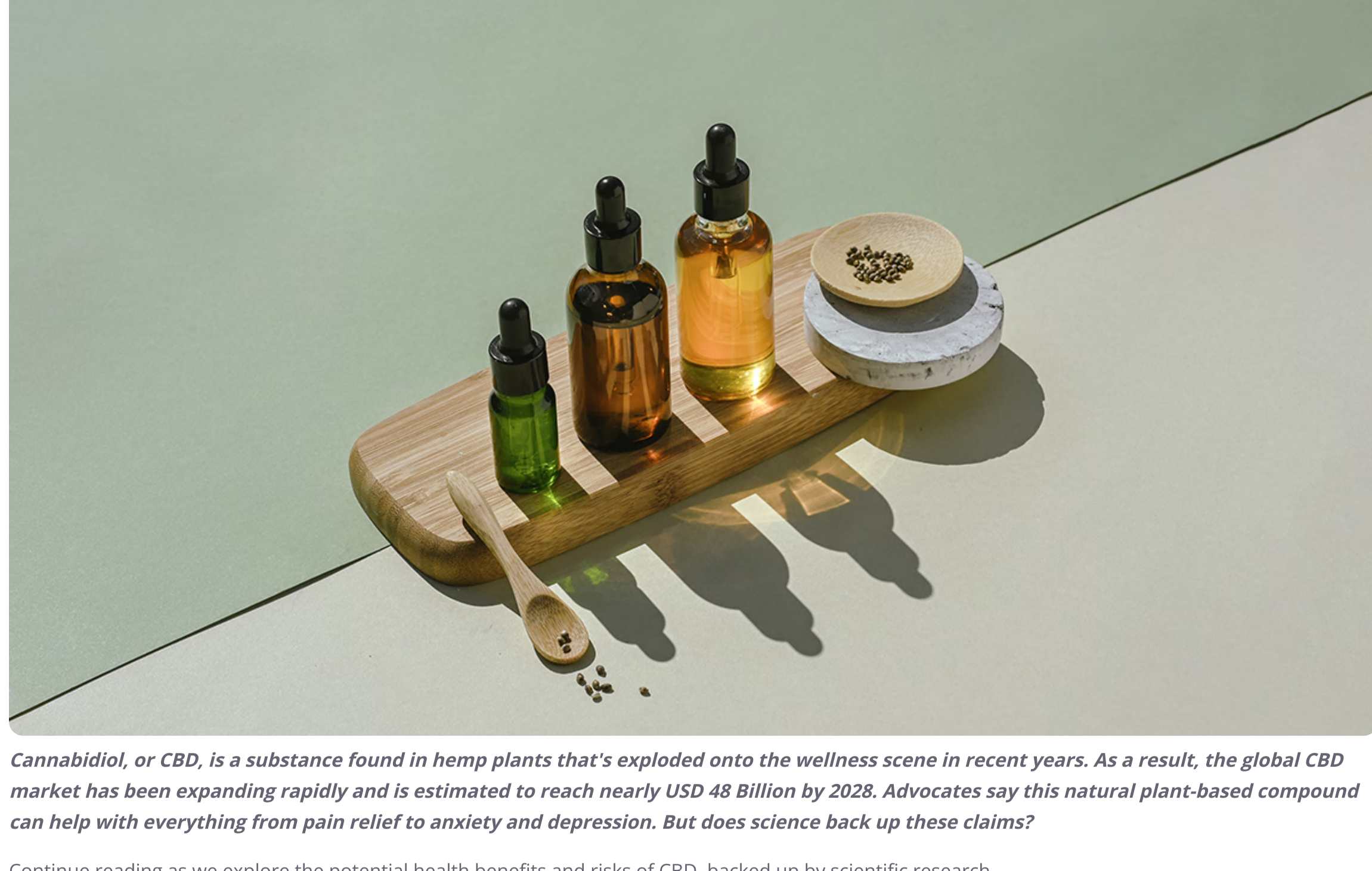
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CBD and Health. The Evidence-Based Benefits and Risks

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Cannabidiol, or CBD, is a substance found in hemp plants that's exploded onto the wellness scene in recent years. As a result, the global CBD market has been expanding rapidly and is estimated to reach nearly USD 48 Billion by 2028. Advocates say this natural plant-based compound can help with everything from pain relief to anxiety and depression. But does science back up these claims?

Continue reading as we explore the potential health benefits and risks of CBD, backed up by scientific research.

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What is CBD?

CBD is an active ingredient in the hemp plant, a variety of *C. sativa* prized for its fiber. *Cannabis sativa* contains a wealth of bioactive compounds — around 500. Of these, at least 100 are substances called cannabinoids, which have unique therapeutic properties. CBD is a cannabinoid, as is THC.

THC or tetrahydrocannabinol is the well-known compound that causes the intoxication often associated with cannabis. Because of this, THC determines the legality of cannabis products. In many countries, hemp and hemp products like CBD must come from hemp plants with a THC content below 0.3% or less.

CBD is a non-intoxicating product that acts in harmony with your body.

How does CBD work?

CBD interacts with your body's endocannabinoid system (ECS). The ECS is a complex network of cell receptors, enzymes, and neurotransmitters called endocannabinoids. The ECS appears to impact homeostasis, or the balance of bodily systems, and experts believe it functions in all species regardless of cannabis use.

When cannabinoids like CBD interact with the ECS receptors, neurotransmitters are released. These chemical messengers relay **information between cells to regulate:**

- Appetite
- Immunity
- Inflammation
- Memory
- Mood
- Pain
- Sleep
- Stress

Because the ECS is involved in numerous bodily processes, this could explain why CBD has such a wide range of potential therapeutic benefits.

How can CBD support health?

CBD has the potential to help with various physical and mental health issues. Although overall research is still in its early stages, some promising findings have emerged.

Eases chronic pain

[CBD appears to have pain-relieving](#) and anti-inflammatory properties. A 2018 review looked at CBD for chronic pain, including cancer pain. The authors concluded that CBD could assist in pain management without negative side effects.

Other studies have found that CBD could improve pain and inflammation related to arthritis. Also called Degenerative Joint Disease (DJD), this chronic condition affects the joints causing pain and gradual loss of mobility.

Likewise, [CBD could reduce neuropathy](#) — nerve damage that causes numbness, tingling, muscle weakness, and pain. Neuropathy is a common complication of diabetes.

There were other promising results in a large 2021 study of more than 2,700 participants living with fibromyalgia. This chronic health condition causes **musculoskeletal pain** throughout the body, alongside fatigue, sleep, memory, and mood issues. The participants reported that CBD prompted at least some, if not significant, improvement in their symptoms.

Reduces anxiety

CBD has also shown promise in [reducing anxiety](#). For example, a study from 2011 found that CBD could reduce social anxiety in people with a fear of public speaking.

It seems that CBD has anxiolytic or anxiety-reducing properties that could help people experiencing a **range of mental health conditions**, including:

- Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)
- Panic disorder
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Social anxiety disorder

A 2012 laboratory study using rats showed the relationship between CBD and serotonin. This chemical messenger relays messages between nerve cells throughout your body and plays a key role in stabilizing mood, creating healthy sleep patterns, regulating digestion, and more.

The study suggested that CBD affects how the brain's receptors respond to serotonin, which has implications for those with anxiety and depression. Further evidence of this was highlighted in a 2020 review of prescription Sativex, a combination of THC and CBD. The authors noted that Sativex might lower anxiety and stress besides helping with chronic pain.

Additionally, a 2019 study found that 72 participants found that CBD could decrease anxiety scores and improve sleep scores.

Sleep disturbances

Sleep is critical for your physical and mental health. Unfortunately, poor sleep is common, with an estimated 50–70 million adults in the United States living with a sleep disorder. When sleep quality declines, it negatively impacts a person's quality of life.

The authors of a 2020 review suggested that because endocannabinoids play a role in the circadian — or sleep-wake — rhythm, [CBD could impact sleep](#). This effect was also noted in the above 2019 study.

An earlier 2016 case study also demonstrated that CBD oil **reduced sleep disturbances** and anxiety in a 10-year-old girl with PTSD.

Loss of bone density

Osteoporosis means 'porous bones' and is a condition that describes the loss of bone density. It **commonly affects females aged 65** and over but can also affect people of any age and gender.

People with low bone density **risk bone fractures**, even after slight falls or seemingly minor trauma. Therefore, treating the condition is essential for overall health.

As yet, there is no specific research demonstrating that CBD can **improve bone density loss**, but there are some promising preclinical studies.

One such study in mice found that CBD interacted with a cannabinoid receptor involved in bone density. The results suggested that the ECS has a critical role in regulating bone remodeling. The authors concluded that this research paved the way for developing CBD-based medications to combat bone density loss.

What are the risks of CBD?

There are few risks associated with **CBD as it's a safe, natural product**, and most people can use it without any negative effects. The World Health Organization (WHO) considers CBD well-tolerated with a good safety profile.

Overall, you're unlikely to experience any [problems when using CBD](#), but as with all supplements and medications, there are some potential side effects, including:

- Appetite changes
- Diarrhea
- Dizziness
- Dry mouth
- Mood issues
- Nausea
- Vomiting

If you're pregnant or breastfeeding, you should ask your doctor's advice before using CBD. As there is not enough known about its effects on unborn babies.

Additionally, people using regular medications should ask their doctor if it's safe for them to use CBD. Some supplements, including CBD, could affect how the body metabolizes certain drugs, so it's essential to check with a healthcare provider first.

Resources:

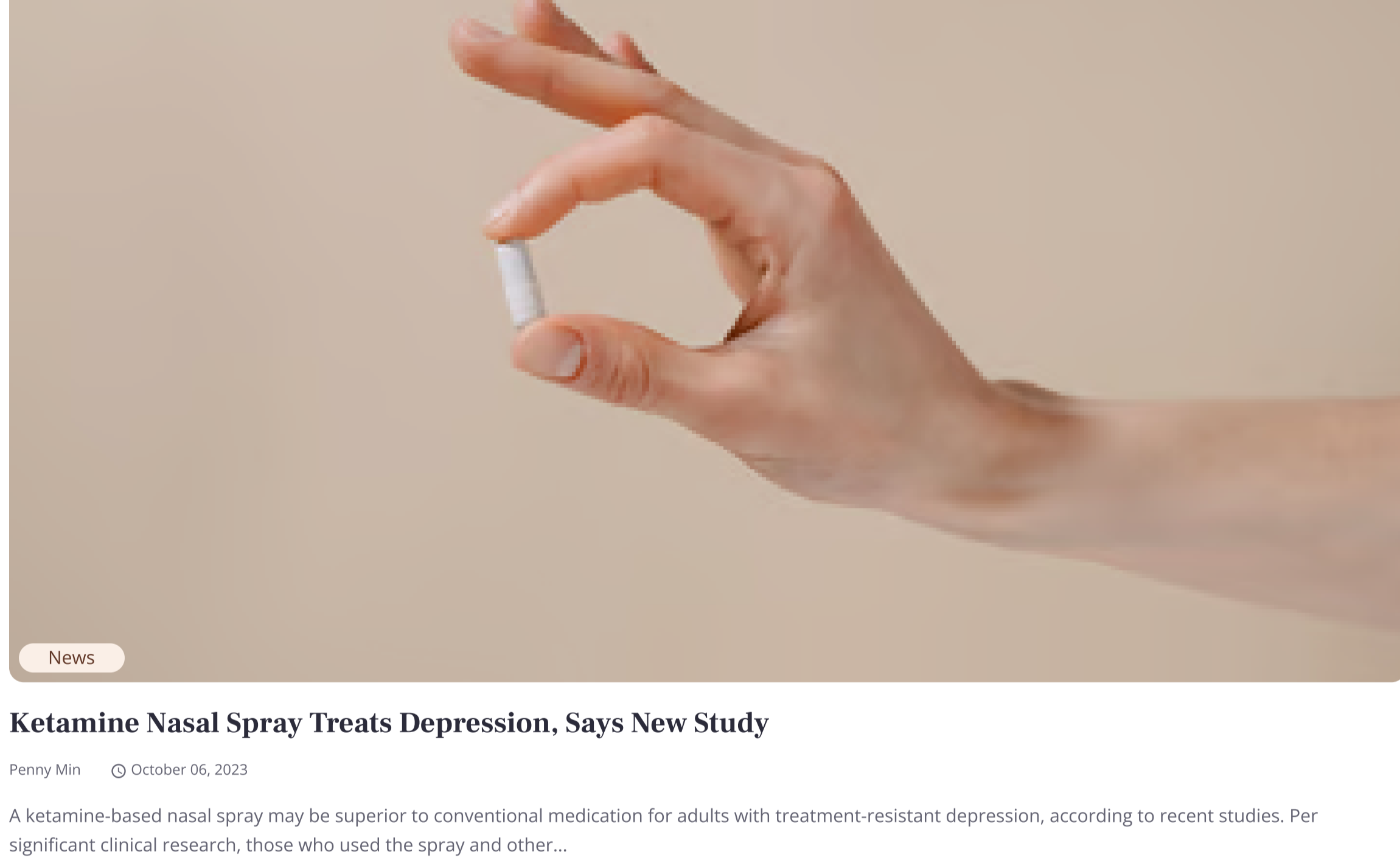
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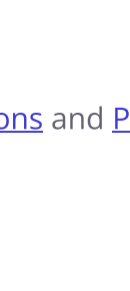
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