

Israelis develop 'cannabis without the high'

30 May 2012

Israeli scientists have cultivated a cannabis plant that doesn't get people stoned in a development that may help those smoking marijuana for medical purposes, a newspaper said on Wednesday.

According to the Maariv daily, the new cannabis looks, smells and even tastes the same, but does not induce any of the feelings normally associated with [smoking marijuana](#) that are brought on by the substance THC, or tetrahydrocannabinol.

"It has the same scent, shape and taste as the original plant -- it's all the same -- but the numbing sensation that users are accustomed to has disappeared," said Tzahi Klein, head of development at Tikkun Olam, the firm that developed the species.

"Many of our patients who tried the new plant come back to us and say: 'You tricked me,'" because they assumed they had been given a placebo, he said.

According to Maariv, Tikkun Olam sought to neutralise the effect of the THC and to increase the effect of another substance called CBD, or [cannabidiol](#), which has been shown to help diabetics and to ease various [psychiatric disorders](#).

Not only does it leave users stone-cold sober, it also doesn't induce the munchies, the hunger pangs that the drug's smokers generally suffer.

Despite the innovation, it is unlikely to have any impact on Israeli law, which outlaws the use of marijuana as illegal except for medical purposes.

According to figures published earlier this year by Sheba Medical Centre and the Israel Cancer Association, [medical marijuana](#) has been approved for use by about 6,000 Israelis suffering from various illnesses.

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APA citation: Israelis develop 'cannabis without the high' (2012, May 30) retrieved 19 September 2020 from <https://phys.org/news/2012-05-israelis-cannabis-high.html>

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