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Cannabinoids in intestinal inflammation and cancer.

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Abstract

Emerging evidence suggests that cannabinoids may exert beneficial effects in intestinal inflammation and cancer. Adaptive changes of the endocannabinoid system have been observed in intestinal biopsies from patients with inflammatory bowel disease and **colon** cancer. Studies on epithelial cells have shown that cannabinoids exert antiproliferative, antimetastatic and apoptotic effects as well as reducing cytokine release and promoting wound healing. In vivo, cannabinoids - via direct or indirect activation of CB(1) and/or CB(2) receptors - exert protective effects in well-established models of intestinal inflammation and **colon** cancer. Pharmacological elevation of endocannabinoid levels may be a promising strategy to counteract intestinal inflammation and **colon** cancer.

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