

Neuroscientists Staci Gruber has been running clinical trials following cannabis use for a range of conditions.

- How's the anxiety?

And in all honesty, how is it?

Today, Gruber is meeting with Erin, a graduate student enrolled in a study, testing CBD as a potential treatment for reducing anxiety.

CBD is one of the main components found in cannabis, but unlike THC, CBD is not psychoactive and not known to be intoxicating.

- I started not getting full panic attacks, but like little baby, like half.

Erin was once outgoing, even performed onstage.

But in high school, panic attacks became unmanageable.

- A panic attack is essentially your fight or flight system going out of control.

- They are a completely unexpected tidal wave of events.

- My heart's beating, I'm hot and dizzy and nauseous.

- [Staci] They can't breathe, they're sweating.

You often hear about people who go to the emergency room.

- We would get these phone calls night and day.

Her mind just raced.

Is she gonna fall down?

Is she gonna faint?

Was she gonna die.

- So imagine this multiple times a week, sometimes multiple times a day.

I think you would do almost anything to try to prevent that from happening.

Then Erin began taking a cannabis extract high-end CBD during a part of this study where both patients and clinicians know which treatment is being administered known as the open-label phase.

- This is the very first clinical trial that looks at a whole plant full spectrum product, which means it has everything from the plant, we haven't pulled anything out and for Erin and for the majority of our patients, at least in the open-label phase of this study, we saw very dramatic improvements in their symptoms of anxiety relatively quickly.

- It was striking.

It was profound and it was within two weeks of her starting the clinical study.

This is a whole new kid.

Someone who was very reticent to go off on your own, but walk down the street on her own or to go try something new, was all of a sudden sending pictures of places she was exploring and feeling just better.

Until all the data are analyzed from a double-blinded clinical trial, Gruber can't rule out a placebo effect.

And more research is needed to see how patients respond after long-term use of CBD.

But Erin sees a profound difference.

- I have reached for my CBD in the middle of an active panic attack.

And as someone who normally would have reached for a benzo and knows that feeling, I can say that the CBD didn't take it away as much as a benzodiazepine, but I definitely felt relief.

And I can't tell you the last time I had a panic attack to be totally honest.