

Use and impacts of cannabis for therapeutic purposes in patients with multiple sclerosis in France and Spain: results from an online patient community study

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Background and objectives

- In France, the possession and use of cannabis is a penal offence. In Spain, legislation allows the private consumption and cultivation of cannabis. Some cannabis-based products, such as Nabiximols, have marketing authorization in both countries but are only available to patients in Spain.
- The objectives were: (1) better understand the use of cannabis for therapeutic purposes by patients with multiple sclerosis (MS) (2) evaluate the impacts of cannabis on MS symptoms (3) compare the results in France and Spain, two countries with different legislations

Methods

Real-world patients data collected via Carenity.com

- Carenity is a global online patient community for patients with chronic conditions. This platform allows patients and caregivers to share their experience, to access medical information and to participate in online surveys, generating real-world patients insights.

Study design

- An online cross-sectional study was conducted from April to July 2019 on Carenity.
- The questionnaire contained 30 closed questions and 1 open-ended question.
- The inclusion criteria were to be a patient, registered on Carenity, with MS, and living in France or Spain.
- 641 patients answered the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

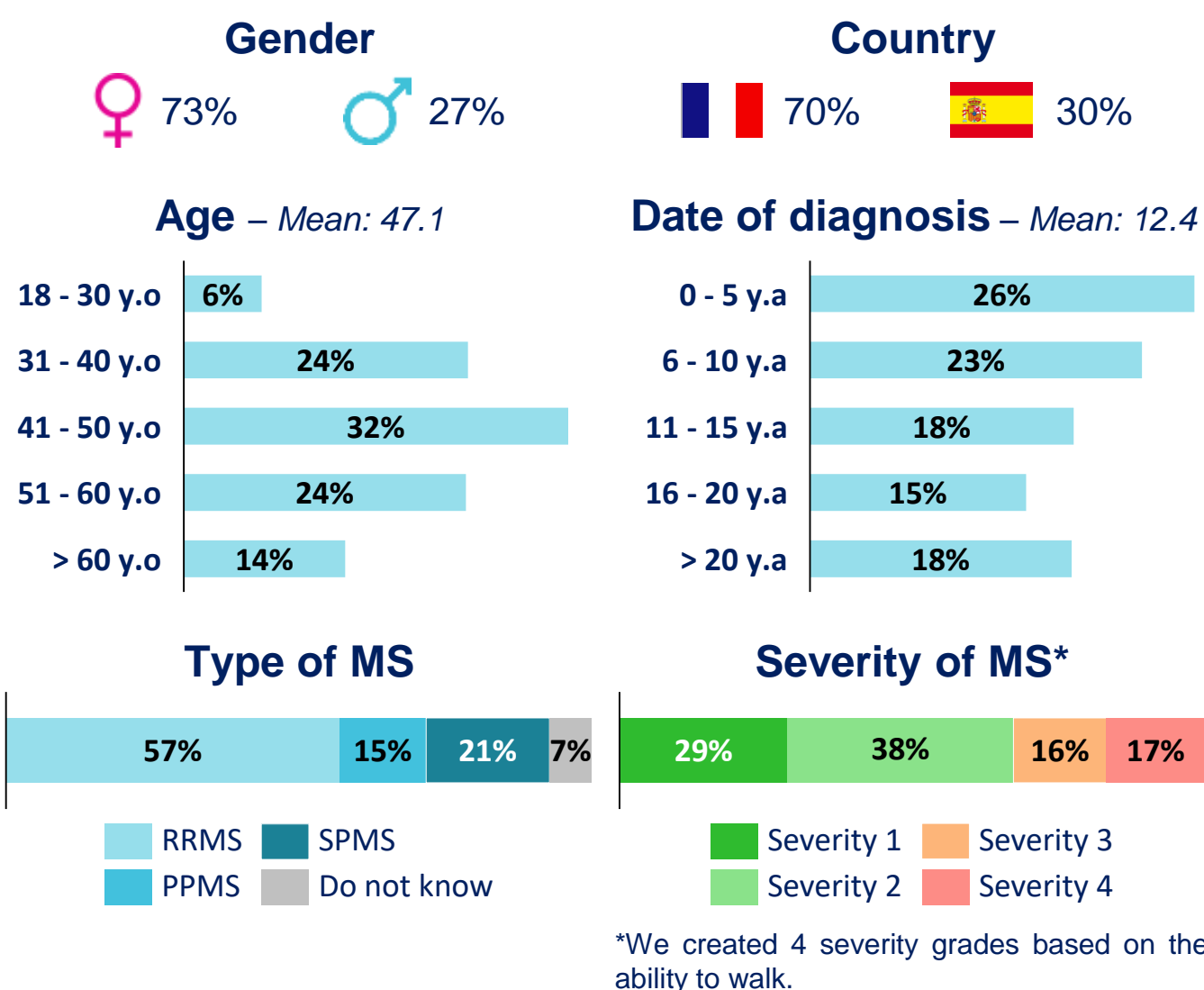
- Rstudio (v3.5.0) was used to perform analysis.

Cannabis use regarding respondents' profile

	n	% of cannabis users	p-value
Country			
France	447	23	0.44
Spain	194	20	
Gender			
Male	175	29	< 0.01
Female	466	19	
Age			
18 – 30 y.o	42	19	0.94
31 – 40 y.o	153	20	
41 – 50 y.o	207	22	
51 – 60 y.o	152	23	
> 60 y.o	87	24	
Type of MS			
RRMS	365	21	0.29
PPMS	95	25	
SPMS	135	27	
Severity of MS			
Severity 1	184	13	< 0.01
Severity 2	247	24	
Severity 3	102	24	
Severity 4	108	29	

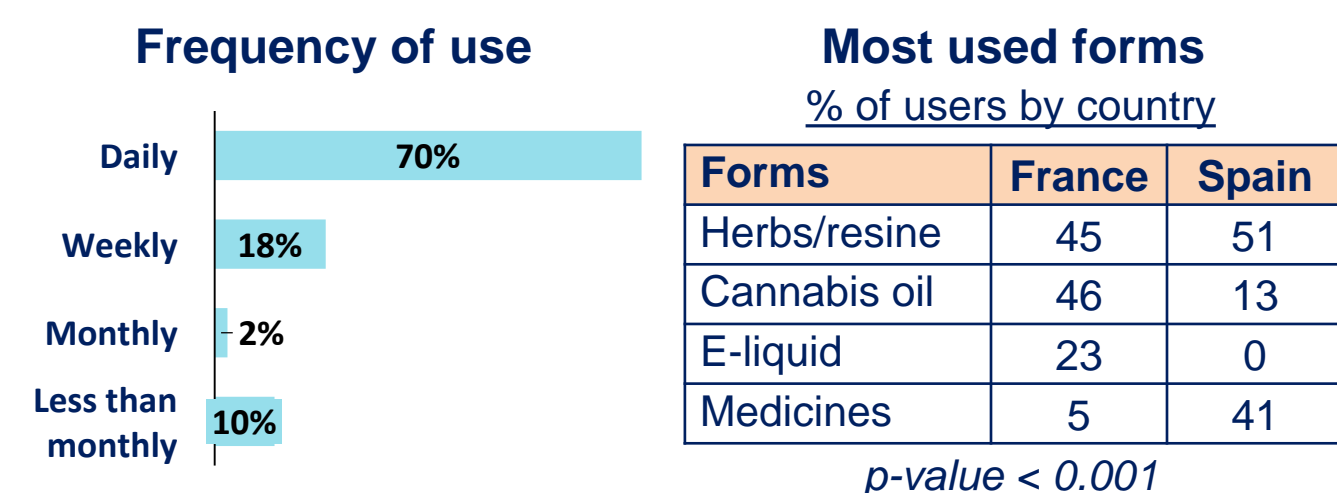
Results

1- Respondents' profile (n=641)



2- Cannabis use for therapeutic purposes

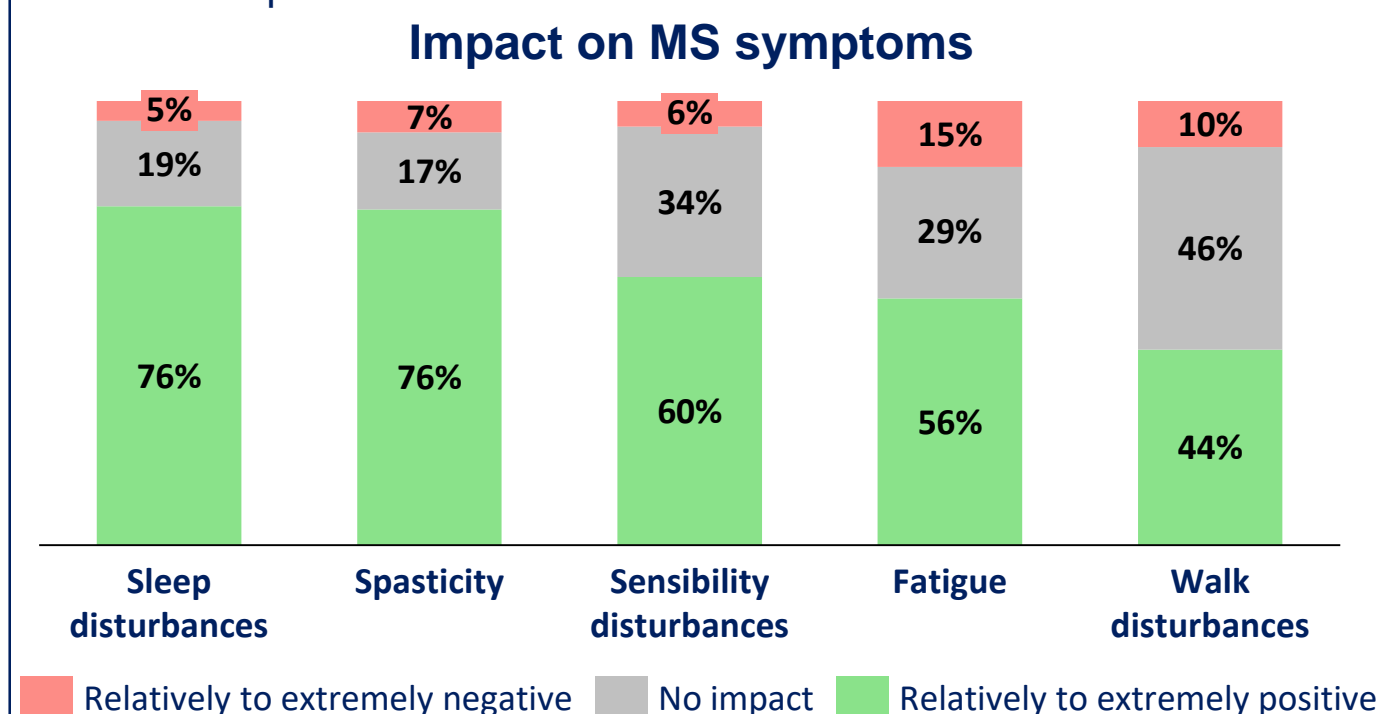
22% of patients use cannabis for therapeutic purposes to manage their MS. They have been using it for 4 years on average.



Male seem to use more cannabis for therapeutic purposes than female. The more severe the condition, the more patients use cannabis to manage it.

3- Impact of cannabis on MS

74% of patients reported that MS-related pain relatively to extremely decreased since they started taking cannabis. No patient declared an increase in pain.



Conclusions

- 22% of patients with MS use cannabis for therapeutic purposes. They notice positive impacts on MS-related symptoms.
- The main difference between countries is the form of cannabis used by patients, probably due to the countries' legislations.
- Deeper analysis based on sample adjustment methods will be performed to better assess differences between France and Spain.

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