Palmitoylethanolamide (PEA) To Treat Glaucoma?

What Is Palmitoylethanolamide (PEA)?

PEA is an endocannabinoid.[1] Our bodies naturally produce endocannabinoids such as PEA[2]. Certain foods such as peanut oil, egg yolk, and soybean lecithin also contain PEA[3]. If the term "endocannabinoid" sounds familiar it is because "cannabis" is the term used to describe plants that produce delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (the main active ingredient in marijuana). You've probably heard that marijuana (cannabis) can be used to treat glaucoma[4]. There is evidence that cannabinoids can be used to treat glaucoma. What about Palmitoylethanolamide (PEA)?

Evidence that Palmitoylethanolamide (PEA) can be used to treat glaucoma:

PEA is naturally found in the ciliary body (the eye tissue that produces aqueous fluid). In patients with glaucoma there is a reduced amount of PEA in the ciliary body.[5] It stands to reason that if patients with glaucoma have less PEA in their eyes then perhaps increasing the amount of PEA could treat glaucoma.

Indeed, there are now multiple studies in which PEA has been shown to lower the intraocular pressure (IOP). Studies published in 2011 and 2013 comparing PEA against placebo demonstrated a statistically significant reduction in IOP with the use of PEA (which was not seen with the placebo)[6]. A separate study was presented at an international meeting in 2013. In this study patients that received PEA had lower IOP and were less likely to lose vision.

Palmitoylethanolamide’s Potential Side Effects and Risks:

As reported in the most recent study, PEA was “safe and well tolerated, with no drug-related adverse effects.” Earlier studies have also noted the lack of significant side effects.

Recommended Dosage:

In the most recent study[7], patients were instructed to take 300mg of PEA by mouth twice daily.

Cost of Palmitoylethanolamide (PEA):

PEA is not cheap. However, if you are interested in taking Palmitoylethanolamide (PEA) as a natural treatment for glaucoma, the commercially available form (PeaPureTM) is $30-40 for a package of 30 (thirty) 400mg capsules. As the study evaluated patients who took a total of 600mg a day the monthly cost of this treatment would be $45-60/month.

References:


