

Palliative Care

CBD Use in Medicine

Cannabidiol or CBD oil continues to increase in popularity despite only small studies and medical information available.

Many of my palliative care patients report trying CBD and other alternative therapies to manage their pain and symptoms. In clinic, I work with patients to understand more about their CBD oil use. It occurs to me that other physicians may be interested in how to talk to patients about CBD.

As you know, there is limited research on the effects of CBD oil because only small studies exist and often they contradict each other. Some patients are sure CBD has improved their condition. Others report feeling no real effect.

As physicians, it is our job to work with our patients on treatment planning. When it comes to palliative care, I treat each case as an individual and will authorize use of treatments, including CBD. A few cautions:

- Talk to patients about dosage. There is no standard dose for CBD oil, so talk to patients about starting small and working up dosage.
- Remind patients to purchase from a trusted CBD source (i.e. not from the gas station) and make sure that there is some language around testing and the source of the CBD in the product itself.
- Discuss side effects, including low blood pressure, dry mouth, light headedness, diarrhea, nausea, and irritability.
- Explain the difference between CBD oils; some contain THC and others do not. THC will show up on

By Katie Johnson, DO, Medical Director of Palliative Care at Beebe

drug testing, while CBD oils without THC should not.

- Be cautious about making claims about what CBD will and will not do, explaining that it affects each person differently and that studies still need to be done.

According to Rosemary Mazanet, MD, PhD, an oncologist and chief scientist at Columbia Care, which provides medical cannabis products in 13 states, including Delaware: “Even if it’s a placebo, if people think it’s working for them, that’s good because people take so many benzodiazepenes, which can be addictive over periods of time.”

Katie Johnson, DO, is an in-hospital physician and Medical Director of Palliative Care at Beebe Healthcare. Dr. Johnson received her Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine from Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine and completed her residency in Internal Medicine at Methodist Dallas Medical Center in Texas. Learn more about Palliative Care at Beebe: www.beebehealthcare.org/palliative-care.



Katie Johnson, DO

Welcome to Beebe

ALLIED HEALTH

▶ **Britney Usilton, FNP**
Beebe Family Practice—
King Street Row

To contact the Beebe Medical Staff office, call 302-645-3499.



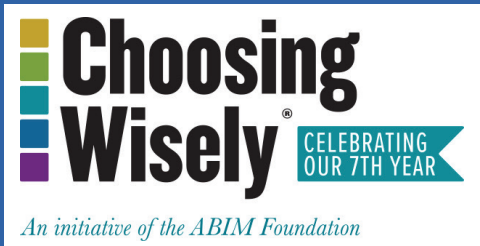
Letter from Dr. Hawtof Choosing Wisely Program at Beebe

The practice and profession of medicine in the United States is one of the best in the world. That is not to say that we don't have issues or problems with our system, but for most health related problems, this is where you want to be to get them fixed. Now with that being said, the profession has been working hard on reducing any waste in the system. One of the campaigns that has taken hold is the "Choosing Wisely" program.

This campaign works to educate both patients and providers on evidence based reasons not to get tests done or to have certain treatments that have been proved to be ineffective, or even harmful, yet add to the cost of healthcare for everyone. Good examples are using antibiotics for colds or early sinus infections, getting an X-ray in certain people with back pain, or getting an electrocardiogram (EKG) before minor surgeries.

Choosing Wisely was started in 2012 and now has over 80 partner medical societies offering evidence-based advice to patients and clinicians. Many states, hospitals (including Beebe Healthcare), and others have developed standards from the Choosing Wisely recommendations that are saving lives while reducing the cost of medicine!

I would encourage you to go to the website at www.chooseingwisely.org or download the Choosing Wisely app from the Apple or Google Play stores. It is free and an easy way to search the many recommendations.



Jeffrey Hawtof, MD, Vice President of Medical Operations

Physician Q&A

Experienced, Quality Spine Surgery, Close to Home

Spinal injuries do not always result from traumatic events. As people age, spine arthritis can occur, which can sometimes lead to severe pain or paralysis if left untreated.

Abimbola Afolabi, MD, has worked with a number of patients who have suffered from debilitating spine arthritis. She is a spine surgeon with Orthopaedic Associates of Southern Delaware, and an affiliate of Beebe Healthcare.

She talks about the advanced spine care available right here in Sussex County.

GET TO KNOW DR. AFOLABI

Q: What trends do you see around your local spine patients?

A: A lot of my patients are retirees and transplants from other states relocating to the beach area. Patients are living longer and understandably want a good quality of life when they retire. Spine arthritis occurs as we age, sometimes causing significant flare-up pain, which can be debilitating. My job is to help patients minimize this flare-up pain so that it is not limiting them in their pursuits. My patients and I work as a team to identify the best treatment course for each one of them. We typically implement and optimize non-operative options for pain management, including anti-inflammatories, muscle relaxers, physical therapy or chiropractic care, and spine injections. In some cases, surgery is warranted and this is offered as a last resort after failed conservative care.

Q: What type of spine procedures do you perform and offer at Beebe Healthcare?

A: I perform a wide range of procedures from minimally invasive (such as microdiscectomy and direct lateral interbody fusion) to larger decompressive, deformity correction procedures such as open wide laminectomy and fusion, and anterior and posterior lumbar interbody fusion. Surgical intervention is tailored to patient's needs after review of symptoms and imaging.

Q: How do you make sure patients are well-informed about spine procedures and all they entail?

A: I use a detailed informed consent listing all the anticipated risks in simplest terms and spend time going over it in detail with each patient at different visits leading up to the surgery. I spend time addressing the concerns of the patient and/or their significant other by answering questions they may have. I also educate the patient on the steps we are taking to mitigate the risks of surgery, such as pre-operative testing to identify any significant medical issues and the use of antibiotics before and after surgery to reduce the risk of infection. My job as a surgeon who is familiar with the surgical process is to be available to the patient and family and help them as they go through this process that is unfamiliar to them. I count it as a privilege to have patients trust me to help them navigate the process.



Abimbola Afolabi, MD

Q: How do the procedures successfully give someone their normal life back? And what does that mean to you?

A: The main reason for most spine surgeries is to relieve extremity (arm or leg) pain and weakness. It's always a pleasure to me when I see patients after surgery and they say their excruciating leg or arm pain before surgery is now gone. Or they report significant improvement in their arm or leg muscle strength so that they can now stand or walk without difficulty, or lift or carry items without issues. It is humbling and exhilarating at the same time when my patients are doing well after surgery and I strive for that outcome with every patient.

Find out more and contact Dr. Afolabi: www.beebehealthcare.org/doctors/abimbola-afolabi-md.



2019 HOLIDAY HOURS FOR WALK-IN SITES

The holiday season is upon us, and with it a temporary change in hours at the Beebe Walk-In Care locations.

- ▶ **CHRISTMAS EVE**
All locations open
- ▶ **CHRISTMAS DAY**
All locations closed
- ▶ **NEW YEAR'S EVE**
All locations open
- ▶ **NEW YEAR'S DAY**
All locations open

Announcement

Beebe Receives 'A' Safety Rating

Beebe Healthcare has been awarded an 'A' in the fall 2019 Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade, a national distinction recognizing Beebe's achievements in protecting patients from harm and providing safer healthcare. The Leapfrog Group is an independent national watchdog organization driven by employers and other purchasers of healthcare committed to improving health care quality and safety for consumers and purchasers. The Safety Grade assigns an 'A', 'B', 'C', 'D' or 'F' grade to all general hospitals across the country based on their performance in preventing medical errors, injuries, accidents, infections, and other harms to patients in their care.



Developed under the guidance of a national Expert Panel, the Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade uses 28 measures of publicly available hospital safety data to assign grades to more than 2,600 U.S. acute-care hospitals twice per year. The Hospital Safety Grade's methodology is peer-reviewed and fully transparent, and the results are free to the public.

To see Beebe Healthcare's full grade details, visit [hospital.safetygrade.org](https://www.hospital.safetygrade.org).

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