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Over a third of US voters say magic mushrooms and other psychedelics have a medical use, new poll shows

John Haltiwanger Jun 1, 2021, 12:40 PM



Research suggests magic mushrooms could help treat symptoms of depression. Joe Amon/Getty Images

35% of US adults say that magic mushrooms have a medical use, while 65% disagree.

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Oregon in 2020 became the first state to legalize mushrooms for therapeutic use.

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More than a third of US voters (35%) say that psychedelic substances like "magic mushrooms" have a medical use, according to [a new Hill-HarrisX poll](#) released Tuesday.

A majority of American voters (65%) said such substances do not have medicinal uses.

There was a huge split in views on this issue across party lines and younger versus older voters.

Overall, 43% of Democrats and 41% of independents said psychedelic substances have a medical use, while only 23% of Republicans said the same.

And a majority of 18 to 29-year-olds (53%) said that psychedelics have a medical use, but majorities of voters 30 and older disagreed.

Research suggests that certain psychedelic substances, including magic mushrooms,

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A study from Imperial College London scientists released in April, for example, found

that psilocybin — the active compound in magic mushrooms — works about [as well as a leading drug \(escitalopram\)](#) to treat patients with moderate or severe major depressive disorder.

Dr. Robin Carhart-Harris, head of the Centre for Psychedelic Research at Imperial College London, told Insider reporter Yeji Jesse Lee, "What's on the table now is the

prospect that psilocybin therapy could be an alternative to SSRIs, if it's at least as good."

"What we're showing is that people could consider psilocybin therapy earlier on in the course of a depression," Carhart-Harris added.

With a growing body of research showing that psychedelic substances have potential medical uses, local governments across the US have begun to take notice.

In 2020, Oregon became the first state to [legalize psilocybin](#) for therapeutic use in supervised settings. Oregon last November also decriminalized the possession of small amounts magic mushrooms — as did Washington, DC. Major cities like Denver, Colorado and Santa Cruz, California have also decriminalized mushrooms.

As views shift on magic mushrooms, recent polling also shows strong support among Americans for legalizing marijuana. A [Pew Research Center survey](#) released last month found 91% of US adults support legalizing marijuana in some form, with 31% backing legalizing it only for medical use. A majority of US adults (60%) supported legalizing marijuana for recreational *and* medical use, the poll found, with less than 10% of adults saying it should not be legal at all.

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