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MARYLAND

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? and ANSWER

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Epilepsy and Seizures * Cannabis History * Why is medication we need federally illegal?



SHELBY'S STORY

Medical cannabis treatment has been truly transformative for one Ocean City, Md. family.

One of six children, 9-year-old Shelby Martin has a condition called Rett syndrome, an extremely rare neurological disorder with devastating effects on motor and language skills, developmental delays, seizures, and severe scoliosis, among other symptoms. She cannot walk or speak and has very limited use of her hands.

When Shelby was around 6 months old, her parents, Buddy and Rachel Martin, noticed that she was no longer progressing along the normal infant milestones.

"At six months, she just plateaued. She was a perfectly normal, healthy baby," said Rachel. "Then she stopped doing anything. She stopped using her hands. She stopped trying to sit up. She stopped trying to roll over."

The first seizure they observed happened at 9 months old, and by 13 months old, she was a patient at Johns Hopkins Hospital. After more than a year of doctor visits, tests, and

uncertainty, she was finally diagnosed with Rett syndrome by a doctor at Kennedy Krieger Institute.

By late 2018, Shelby was experiencing upwards of 60 seizures per day, too many to accurately keep count, and she had not been able to sleep through the night since infancy. The heavy dosages of multiple anti-seizure medications were not keeping her seizures under control, and these medications take a serious toll on the human body.

Buddy and Rachel did a bit of research and ultimately reached out to Robert Davis R.Ph, Clinical Director of Hi Tide Dispensary in West Ocean City, Md.

A pharmacist for more than 25 years, Davis was eager to help this family find a solution. They worked together through the process to get Shelby registered with the Maryland Medical Cannabis Commission (MMCC). Once registered, Davis developed a treatment plan for her.

"I had other young patients, but Shelby was really the one with the highest need and the most severe case of seizure

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disorder,” said Davis.

Shelby’s treatment to control her seizures began in November 2018 using a tincture blend with a ratio of 10 parts CBD to 1 part THC from The Feel Collection, manufactured in Maryland by Chesapeake Alternatives (GTI).

While Davis stressed to the family that he did not expect to see results for several weeks, at least, the results were remarkable and almost immediate. By the fourth day of Shelby’s treatment, 60-plus seizures per day was a thing of the past. Nearly a year later, you could count on one hand the number of seizures Shelby has had since starting treatment, according to her parents.

“After the oils, she will now look right at me with these giant blue eyes, smile so big it lights her face up, and hold my hand on purpose. That’s something she couldn’t do before,” said Rachel.

Treatment for her sleep quality began shortly after with a second oil Tincture “Dreamy” from The Feel Collection, and now she is able to consistently sleep through the night.

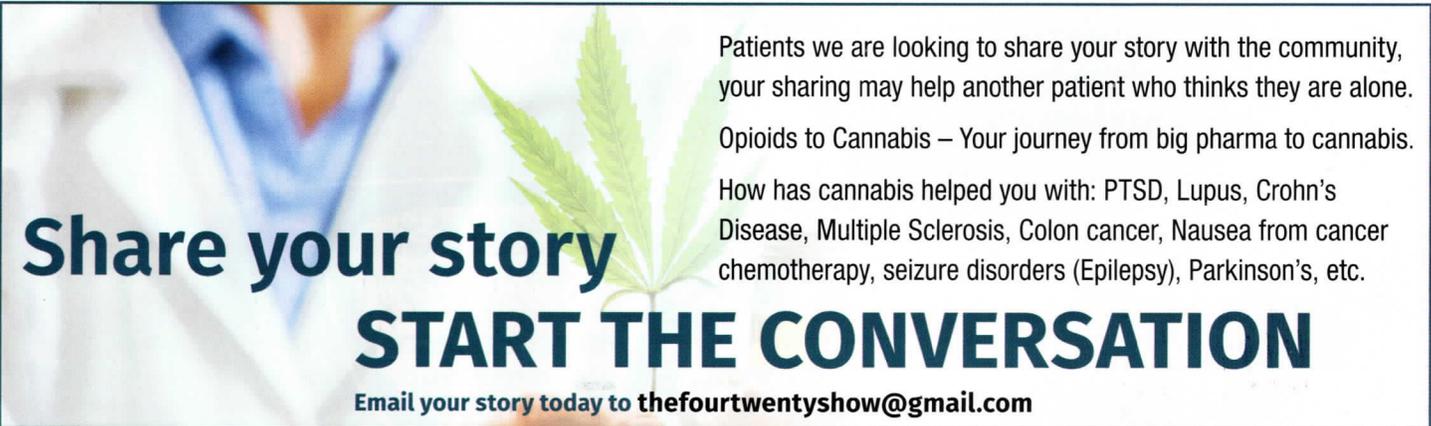
“Many people that have a seizure disorder can benefit from the use of the CBD oils and Cannabis products,” said Davis.

Medical cannabis has helped to stabilize Shelby’s seizures, allowing her neurologist to decrease dosages of some of the traditional pharmaceuticals she takes and even remove some medications from her therapy. Minimizing these pharmaceuticals is important to preserve her kidney and liver function as long as is possible.

Shelby’s life was, of course, not the only one positively impacted by her treatment with medical cannabis. This was a game-changer for Buddy, Rachel, and their five other children as well. After losing their house in a fire in 2015 and Buddy’s own severe health issues on top of Shelby’s needs, the Martin family has had a tough go of things.

Now that Shelby’s condition is vastly more manageable, the family is not stretched as thinly as they were. These days, however, they’re able to do more as a family, like going fishing.

“In so many aspects, it changed our lives,” Buddy said of the cannabis treatment. “You couldn’t even name them all.”



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