

Stanford Researchers Open Medical Cannabis Company with Oral Therapy for MS Pain, Spasticity as Initial Goal

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A new medical cannabis company called [Katexco Pharmaceuticals](#) aims to develop oral therapies that harness the brain's endocannabinoid and nicotine receptors to treat inflammatory diseases such as [multiple sclerosis](#).

Co-founded by two [Stanford University](#) researchers — Jonathan Rothbard, PhD, and Lawrence Steinman, MD — Katexco will leverage their expertise in immunological therapy and use a synergistic approach to use the body's natural system to curb inflammation.

In addition to multiple sclerosis, Katexco will work to treat gastrointestinal conditions such as Crohn's disease, and gout.

“Katexco is confident that we will be successful since we are stimulating a naturally occurring neuro-immunological pathway that will allow our treatment to be safe, widely effective and significantly more cost-effective, compared with current

therapies for inflammatory diseases,” Steinman, director and chairman at Katexco, said in a [press release](#).

Endocannabinoid receptors are part of the endocannabinoid system present in the brain and elsewhere. Binding the receptors to cannabinoids can regulate such functions as pain, memory, mood, and the immune system. Cannabinoids are naturally occurring molecules that interact with the receptors to release neurotransmitters; they are also the active ingredients of medical marijuana.

Similarly, nicotine receptors present in the nervous system and muscles work to regulate the neuromuscular system. These receptors respond to drugs like nicotine that serve as muscle relaxants to ease inflammation and pain.

Katexco is developing an oral cannabis-based therapeutic that will stimulate these naturally occurring neuro-immunological pathways, and serve as an agonist to help ease the pain and [spasticity](#) experienced by MS patients. It plans for this therapy to benefit both relapsing and progressive disease forms.

“Katexco has shown in animal models that their patented molecules engage key receptors on immune cells that reduced inflammatory diseases,” the company’s [website states](#).

According to Rothbard, CEO and chief scientific officer at Katexco, “the link between the cannabinoid pathway and anti-inflammatory effects is unprecedented, and we are beginning to understand more fully just how the body regulates itself. The goal is to ultimately develop a whole new class of compounds that target several disorders with anti-inflammatory indications.”

The company obtained an exclusive license for the technology used to manufacture the proprietary therapeutic from Stanford University. Its founders also plan on developing therapeutics for rheumatoid arthritis, atherosclerosis, and osteoarthritis.

<https://multiplesclerosisnewstoday.com/2018/10/26/stanford-researchers-open-medical-cannabis-company-with-oral-therapy-for-ms-pain-spasticity-as-lead-product/>