

What's pain got to do with it?

Bethany Shorey-Fennell, PhD¹, Renee E. Magnan, PhD^{1,2},
Benjamin O. Ladd, PhD^{1,2}, & Jessica L. Fales, PhD¹

¹Washington State University Vancouver

²Translational Addiction Research Center, Washington State University

INTRODUCTION

- Many young adults experience chronic pain
- Young adults may use cannabis to self-medicate pain
- Little is known about young adult users perceptions of risks and benefits
- RQ: Do young adults with and without chronic pain differ in their perceptions of risks and benefits of cannabis use?

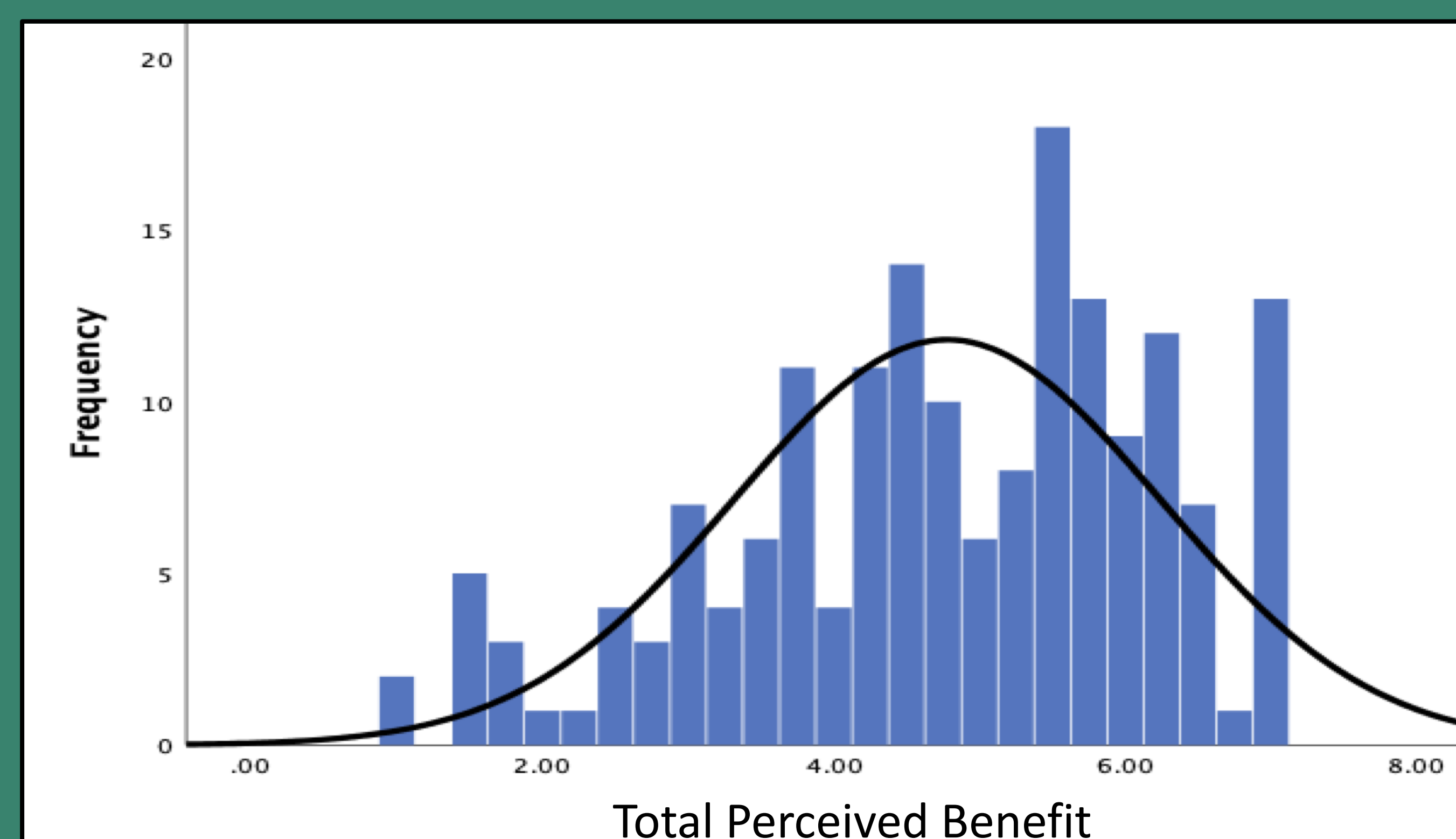
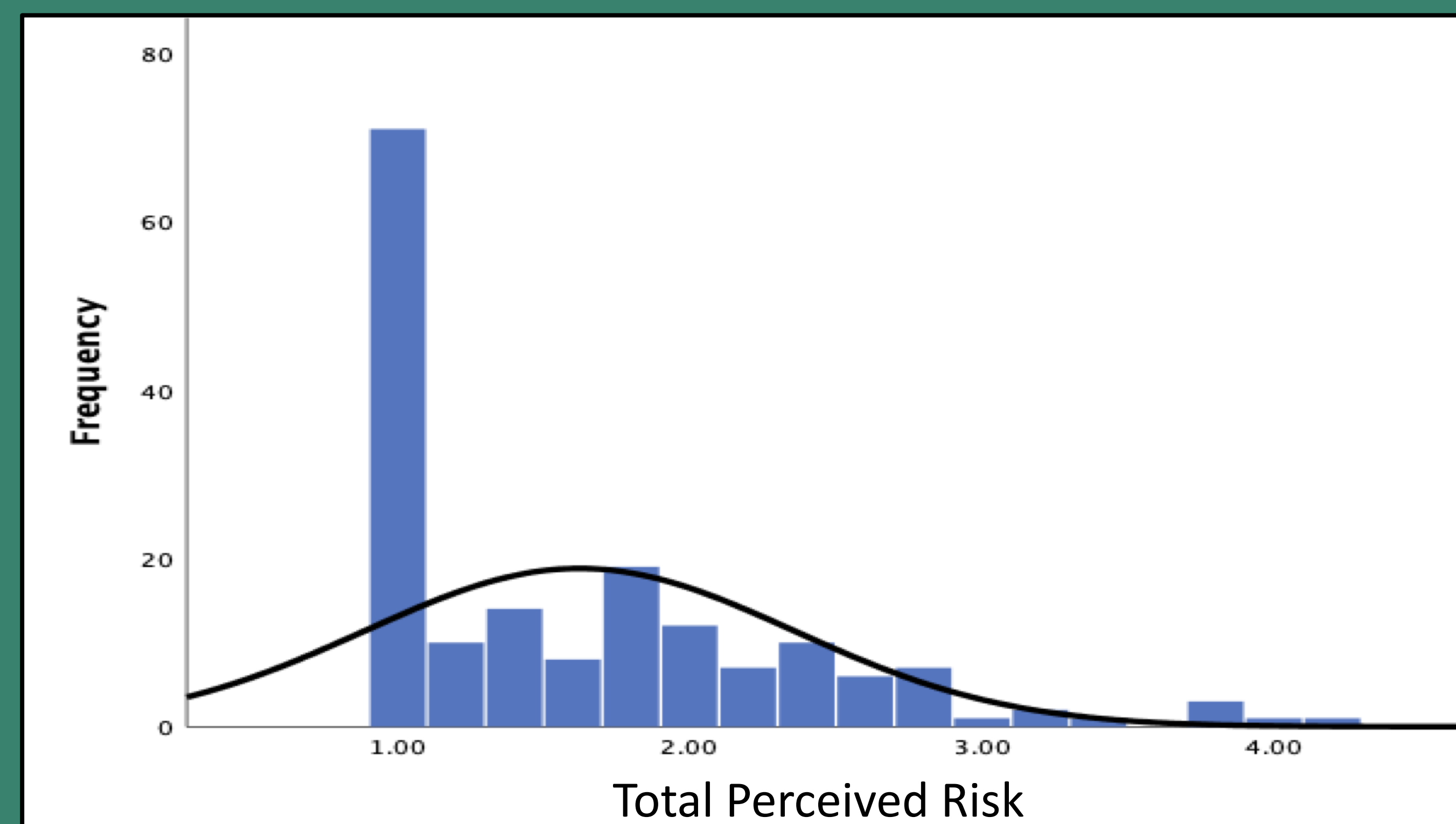
METHOD

- N = 176, ages 18-29, Mage=21.14
- 42.7% female, 4.0% non-binary, 76.7% white
- 80.7% use \geq daily
- 51.1% meet chronic pain criteria
- Indicated perceived lifetime chance of five risk and five benefit outcomes (1=Very low, 7=Very high)

RESULTS

- A large proportion of the sample (40.3%) reported an average risk score of 1.00.
- Only one difference between pain groups: those without chronic pain anticipate more personal benefit

Young adults perceive
Minimal Risks &
Moderate Benefits
from their cannabis use
regardless of chronic pain status



	Pain (N=88) M(SD)	No Pain (N=85) M(SD)	Cohen's d, t-test p value
Total Risk	1.62 (0.76)	1.63 (0.71)	.02, p=.91
Personal Harm	1.45 (0.87)	1.57 (0.94)	.13, p=.37
Neg. Health	2.03 (1.32)	2.02 (1.11)	.01, p=.96
Neg. Mental Health	2.15 (1.38)	2.15 (1.34)	.00, p=.97
Harm Others	1.18 (0.60)	1.21 (0.56)	.05, p=.73
Increase Pain	1.27 (0.84)	1.20 (0.62)	.09, p=.53
Total Benefit	4.68 (1.49)	4.88 (1.44)	.14, p=.37
Personal Ben. *	4.53 (1.94)	5.15 (1.74)	.34, p=.03
Pos. Health	4.40 (1.67)	4.25 (1.57)	.09, p=.54
Pos. Mental Health	4.76 (1.80)	4.88 (1.76)	.07, p=.66
Ben. Others	3.79 (2.25)	4.24 (1.62)	.23, p=.14
Decrease Pain	5.89 (1.48)	5.87 (1.62)	.01, p=.95

DISCUSSION

- Very low perceptions of risks
- Moderately high benefit perceptions, with non-pain participants expecting slightly more lifetime benefits
- Focusing on particular risks/benefits could yield targets for health education, e.g. this heavy using sample may underestimate mental health risks, but accurately assess potential pain management applications.

For more information or a list of references,
contact Bethany Shorey-Fennell:
b.shoreyfennell@wsu.edu