



Patient Care Guide for  
the Responsible Use of  
Medical Marijuana



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## Methods of Medicinal Marijuana Administration

### Water Pipe (Bong)

A long tubular water pipe with a metal or glass bowl attached, users fill the tube in part with water and pack the bowl with marijuana. Users light the bowl and breathe through the tube, filtering the smoke through the water before inhaling.



### Pipe

A pipe guarantees a “one-hit potential,” wherein a desired amount of marijuana is put inside a bowl with a metal screen and a stem through which the marijuana smoke will pass through. This method allows you to control the amount of weed intake per given time as well as save more quantities of weed burned.

### Vaporizer.

The healthiest way to inhale any medicinal cannabis, this device allows the medicine to be lightly heated to extract only the medicinal properties of the plant.

## Differences Between *Cannabis indica* and *Cannabis sativa*

### Indica or Sativa? Which is best for me?

A [Cannabis indica](#) plant may have a [CBD/THC](#) ratio 4–5 times that of [Cannabis sativa](#). Cannabis with relatively high ratios of CBD:THC is less likely to induce [anxiety](#) than vice versa. Indica has more cannabidiol and sativa has more THC.<sup>[28]</sup> This might partially be due to CBD's [antagonist](#) effects at the [cannabinoid receptor](#), compared to THC's [partial agonist](#) effect.<sup>[29]</sup> The relatively large amount of CBD contained in *Cannabis indica*, means, compared to an *Cannabis sativa*, the effects are modulated significantly. The effects of *sativa* are well known for its cerebral high, hence used daytime as medical cannabis, while *indica* is well known for its sedative effects and preferred night time as medical cannabis. Indica plants are normally shorter and stockier plants than *sativas*. They have wide, deeply serrated leaves and a compact and dense flower cluster. The effects of *indicas* are predominantly physical and sedative. Due to the relaxing nature of *indicas*, they are best used for non-active times of the day, and before bed. *Indica* strains generally have higher levels of C.B.D and C.B.N and lower levels of T.H.C.<sup>[30]</sup>

## Active Medical Marijuana Compounds

Medical marijuana (*Cannabis*) contains 483 compounds. At least 80 of these are cannabinoids (8,9,10) which are the basis for medical and scientific use of cannabis. This presents the research problem of isolating the effect of specific compounds and taking account of the interaction of these compounds.

<sup>(11)</sup> Cannabinoids can serve as appetite stimulants, antiemetics (anti-nausea), antispasmodics, and have some analgesic (pain-relieving) effects.

<sup>(12)</sup> Five important cannabinoids found in the cannabis plant are tetrahydrocannabinol, cannabidiol, cannabinol,  $\beta$ -caryophyllene, and cannabigerol.

### Tetrahydrocannabinol

Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) is the primary compound responsible for the psychoactive effects of cannabis. The compound is a mild analgesic, and cellular research has shown the compound has antioxidant activity. <sup>(13)</sup> THC is believed to interact with parts of the brain normally controlled by the endogenous cannabinoid neurotransmitter, anandamide.<sup>(14,15)</sup> Anandamide is believed to play a role in pain sensation, memory, and sleep.

### Cannabidiol

Cannabidiol (CBD) has been shown to relieve convulsions, inflammation, anxiety, cough, congestion and nausea, and it inhibits cancer cell growth.<sup>(17)</sup> Cannabidiol is a major constituent of medical cannabis. CBD represents up to 40% of extracts of medical cannabis.<sup>(16)</sup> Cannabidiol has been shown to relieve convulsion, inflammation, anxiety, cough, congestion and nausea, and it inhibits cancer cell growth.<sup>(18)</sup> Recent studies have shown cannabidiol to be as effective as atypical antipsychotics in treating schizophrenia.<sup>(18)</sup> Because cannabidiol relieves the aforementioned symptoms, cannabis strains with a high amount of CBD may benefit people with multiple sclerosis, frequent anxiety attacks and Tourette syndrome. <sup>(16,19,20)</sup>

### Cannabinol

Cannabinol (CBN) is a therapeutic cannabinoid found in *Cannabis sativa* and *Cannabis indica*.<sup>(21)</sup> It is also produced as a metabolite, or a breakdown product, of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC).<sup>(22)</sup> CBN acts as a weak agonist of the CB<sub>1</sub> and CB<sub>2</sub> receptors, with lower affinity in comparison to THC. <sup>(23,24)</sup>

### $\beta$ -Caryophyllene

Part of the mechanism by which medical cannabis has been shown to reduce tissue inflammation is via the compound  $\beta$ -caryophyllene.<sup>(25)</sup> A cannabinoid receptor called CB<sub>2</sub> plays a vital part in reducing inflammation in humans and other animals. <sup>(25)</sup>  $\beta$ -Caryophyllene has been shown to be a selective activator of the CB<sub>2</sub> receptor.<sup>(25)</sup>  $\beta$ -Caryophyllene is especially concentrated in cannabis essential oil, which contains about 12–35%  $\beta$ -caryophyllene <sup>(25)</sup>

### Cannabigerol

Like cannabidiol, cannabigerol is not psychoactive. Cannabigerol has been shown to relieve intraocular pressure, which may be of benefit in the treatment of glaucoma <sup>(26,27)</sup>

## A Word About Edibles

Not all livers are created equal. In order for ingested cannabinoids to enter your bloodstream and find their way to your cannabinoid receptors, they must first pass through your liver. If your liver does not have the proper enzyme make-up that allows the active compounds to enter the bloodstream, you will feel little or no effect. The opposite may occur where people with certain enzyme profile may eat very little cannabis and feel very strong effects. When smoking cannabis for instance, cannabinoids enter your bloodstream through the lungs, not the liver, so it is very possible that a person can have varying degrees of benefit depending on the method of intake.



## Dosing of Edibles

One of the many benefits of our edibles is that patients are able to regulate their dosages themselves. We strongly suggest new patients start with a maximum dosage of 10 mg daily and increase conservatively until symptom improvement is achieved. You may want to wait to graduate up to our 25 and 50 mg edibles until you have established your daily dosing with our 10 mg edibles first. Please keep in mind that edibles can take 1 to 2 1/2 hours to take effect, so be patient before increasing the amount you consume in one sitting. Please consult your recommending doctor for further dosing guidelines.

## What are my Options for Administering my Medicine?

There are several methods for administration of your medical marijuana dosage including:

- Vaporization
- Smoking dried buds
- Transdermal or topical application (ie. Lotion, oil)
- Drinking teas or concentrated extracts
- Eating extracts (ie. Candy, brownies, cookies, butter)
- Taking capsules

The comparison of these methods was the subject of an investigative study conducted by the Federal Government agency *National Institutes of Health* (7).

A variety of apparatuses are available to assist with marijuana delivery into the body including:

- Cigarette (rolling paper)
- Pipe
- Water pipe
- Vaporizer

## Potential Drug Interactions with Medical Marijuana

### **Sedative medications (Barbiturates)**

Taking marijuana along with sedative medications might cause too much sleepiness.

### **Sedative medications (CNS depressants)**

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### **Theophylline**

Taking marijuana might decrease the effects of theophylline. But there isn't enough information to know if this is a big concern.

### **Disulfiram (Antabuse)**

Taking marijuana along with Disulfiram can cause agitation, trouble sleeping, and irritability.

### **Fluoxetine (Prozac)**

Taking marijuana with fluoxetine (Prozac) might cause you to feel irritated, nervous, jittery, and excited. Doctors call this hypomania.

### **Warfarin (Coumadin)**

Smoking marijuana while taking warfarin (Coumadin) might increase the chance of bruising and bleeding.

**Alcohol** used with marijuana can result in nausea, sleepiness, visual disturbance, loss of coordination, decision-making, balance, and judgment.

In addition to the above interactions, do not use marijuana if:

- You are pregnant or breast-feeding.
- You have heart problems or hypertension (high blood pressure).
- You have lung problems.
- You have seizures (epilepsy).
- You have immune system problems.
- You are scheduled for surgery in the next two weeks. Marijuana may cause excessive sedation if combined with medications used during and after surgery.

### **Non-prescription Medication and Supplements**

Please consult with your physician prior to consuming Medical Marijuana while taking non-prescription (over the counter) medications or while consuming supplements.

### **Do Not Consume Medical Marijuana while:**

You are caring for children, elderly, or disabled people.  
You are operating a motor vehicle or other machinery.