

THE PATIENT'S GUIDE TO MEDICINAL CANNABIS



OVERVIEW

Cannabis today is used to manage a variety of conditions including pain, inflammation, sleep and anxiety. The Clinic Network (TCN) is here to provide guidance as to whether medical cannabis is a suitable therapy for you.

YOUR PATH WITH TCN

MEDICAL ENCOUNTER

Each TCN appointment begins with the Medical Encounter. When your appointment time arrives, you will be called in to see one of our Practitioners. The Medical Encounter may be face to face in one of our convenient clinic locations, or via telemedicine - you will be informed prior to the consultation. The practitioner will have reviewed your medical history before the appointment and will likely have some follow up questions for you. Any questions you have regarding how to correctly use cannabis as a medicine will be clearly explained.

TCN MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION PROCESSOR (MAP)

Once the physician has approved you to receive medical cannabis you will proceed to meet a TCN MAP. The role of the MAP will be to describe and discuss cannabis ingestion methods, the characteristics of THC and CBD (the active ingredients in cannabis) and help you choose a Health Canada approved Licensed Producer. The MAP will help you complete the Registration Document on the Licensed Producer's website and walk you through the online ordering, payment and shipping process.

POST ACCESS CARE

Once you have started your cannabis therapy, you will be monitored regularly by our Post Access Care nurse. The nurse will check in with you at regular intervals to ensure that your medication is working and to answer any questions you may have. Your dosage may change due to a scheduled titration protocol during this enhanced monitoring. Our Pac nurse will ensure that you are feeling well and getting the maximum medical benefits desired from your cannabis therapy.

PLACING AN ORDER AND RECEIVING YOUR CANNABIS

All Licensed Producers follow the same registration and processing protocol. Upon receiving your registration information and processing it into their system, the Licensed Producer will contact you confirming your registration.

****Note:** Registration with a Licensed Producer MAY initiate an auto email from them. Usually the communication relates to "Send in your Medical Document" Upon completion of your appointment with the TCN Educator they will ensure that the Medical Document has been successfully submitted to the correct Licensed Producer

The confirmation communication will ALSO include LOGIN INSTRUCTIONS for their website and information on how to order.

Once you have placed an order, you will receive an email informing you of the name of the courier company (Canada Post, Purolator etc.) and a tracking number. The shipment will typically arrive, in a nondescript package, within 24-48 hours and will require a signature from someone at the residence that is 18 years or older.

FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENT

The College of Physicians & Surgeons in each province requires that every patient be re-assessed by their prescribing practitioner at 3-6 months intervals following the initial consultation. Your MAP will provide you with the correct information for your location to schedule the next appointment. Our team is here to offer on-going support and education, as well as answer any questions that you may have. If you would like to contact TCN prior to your follow-up appointment, please contact the TCN central administration call centre at 1 (855) 462-3646.



Cannabis 101

ENDOCANNABINOID SYSTEM

The endocannabinoid system (ECS) is a naturally-occurring network of receptors found in cells throughout the human body. It is involved in regulating a variety of important processes including appetite, pain-sensation, mood, memory, sleep and immune response. The ECS is also responsible for mediating the pharmacological effects of cannabis.

The three main components of the ECS are:

- Cannabinoid Receptors – found on the surface of cells. When activated, they cause changes in the body.
- Cannabinoids – small molecules that activate cannabinoid receptors.
- Metabolic Enzymes – break down cannabinoids after they have been used to activate receptors.

Two of the most well-studied receptors are called cannabinoid-receptor 1 (CB1) and cannabinoid-receptor 2 (CB2). They are present throughout the body, with elements found in the brain and in every major organ system.

Cannabinoids produced naturally by cells within the human body are termed endocannabinoids. They help to keep our bodies in balance. Scientific research has shown that changes in ECS activity, or a deficiency in endocannabinoids, may correlate with a wide range of disease states and the onset of negative symptoms. Cannabinoids found in the cannabis plant are called phytocannabinoids. To date more than 100 endocannabinoids have been identified, including THC and CBD. Like human endocannabinoids, these molecules can bind to and activate cannabinoid receptors. They may be used to help restore balance in our ECS and reduce negative symptoms.

PHYTOCANNABINOIDS

Among cannabinoids found in the cannabis plant, THC and CBD are the most widely studied. Cannabis strains vary in their THC and CBD concentrations, and in the ratio of THC to CBD. As such, therapeutic benefits will vary depending on the strain being used.

Both CBD and THC are chemically similar to our body’s own endocannabinoids. This allows them to interact with the cannabinoid receptors, causing downstream effects, including those that help relieve symptoms.

CBD and THC have many of the same medicinal benefits and can provide relief from several of the same symptoms. One key difference however is that CBD is a non-psychoactive compound. That means it doesn’t cause the euphoric effects (“high”) that is associated with THC. Some people may prefer to use CBD because of the lack of this side effect.

In order to activate them, cannabinoids need to be heated. This process is called decarboxylation. It occurs when you smoke or vaporize the dried flower to above 120°C. Oils, soft gels and other edibles contain cannabis that has already been decarboxylated, so it doesn’t need to be heated.

Effects of CBD	Effects of THC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pain reliever - Anti-nausea - Anti-inflammatory - Anti-seizure - Anti- anxiety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pain reliever - Anti-nausea - Appetite stimulant - Sleep aid
<p>*Non-psychoactive (reduces psychoactive effects of THC)</p>	<p>*Psychoactive</p>



Potential Health Benefit	CBD	THC
Reduces inflammation	✓	✓
Decreases spasms in the intestines	✓	
Relieves anxiety	✓	
Reduces Inflammation in the intestines	✓	
Suppresses appetite	✓	
Potential to Protect against nervous system degeneration	✓	
Reduces nausea	✓	✓
Relieves pain	✓	✓
Reduces seizures	✓	
Decreases muscle spasms	✓	✓
Aids in sleep		✓
Stimulates appetite		✓



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Elevates mood		✓
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TERPENES

Terpenes are fragrant oils secreted by the cannabis plant. They are responsible for the unique smell of different cannabis strains. Research has suggested that when a terpene interacts with cannabinoid receptors they can assist or hinder the effects of cannabinoids. The terpene profile helps us do more than distinguish strains by smell. It can also help us understand why patients with medical conditions seem to benefit more from one strain compared to another strain with a similar THC or CBD concentration.

	Pain	Inflammation	Sleep	Energy	Calming	Focus	Uplifting	Antifungal
α Pinene	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Myrcene	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	
β Pinene	✓	✓		✓		✓		
Humulene	✓	✓			✓		✓	
β Caryophyllene	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Limonene		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Linalool	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Eucalyptol	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Terpineol	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
Nerolidol		✓	✓		✓			
Terpinolene			✓		✓			
δ 3 Carene		✓	✓			✓		
Geraniol	✓	✓					✓	

How to use your medical cannabis

In addition to identifying strains that work best for your symptoms, it is important to explore the different ways to use cannabis. Each method works differently and can be used to target certain conditions or achieve specific outcomes.

Method	Onset	Duration	Notes
Inhalation - Vaporizing - Smoking (joint, pipe, bong)	1-5 mins	1-3 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absorbed through the lungs • Ideal for quick relief of symptoms • Vaporizing dried flower is better than smoking it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lower temperature ensures that the cannabinoids vaporize but do not burn which leads to a more efficient extraction of the medicinal compounds - Less irritating to the lungs - Better taste
Ingestion - Oils - Edibles	45-90 mins	4-8 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absorbed through the digestive system • Ideal for longer term management of symptoms • Oils can be taken directly or mixed with food and drink • Essential fats in the oils help with absorption • Make edibles using oil or by making your own oil/butter from dry flower • Start low and wait at least 4 hours before taking a second dose • Oils from LPs cannot be smoked or vaporized
Topicals - Lotions - Balms - Oils			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absorbed through the skin. • Ideal for localized pain relief, muscle soreness, tension, and inflammation • Non-intoxicating

Cannabis Side-Effects

The flowers and leaves of the cannabis plant are used for their ability to cause effects on the mind. These include:

- Feeling high (euphoria) – THC containing products
- A sense of well-being
- Relaxation
- Heightened sensory experiences:
 - sight
 - taste
 - smell
 - sound

THC may cause temporary side effects, such as:

- Increased heart rate, which can be dangerous for people with heart conditions
- Decreased blood pressure, which could lead some patients to feel light-headed
- Coordination problems
- Dry mouth
- Red eyes
- Slower reaction times
- Anxiety or panic

CBD is well tolerated, even in large doses. Research suggests any side effects that do occur with the use of CBD are likely the result of drug-to-drug interactions between CBD and other medications. It is therefore important to let your prescriber know about any medications you are currently taking.

Neither compound is fatal. However, high THC use may be connected to long-term negative psychiatric effects. This is especially true for adolescents who consume large amounts of THC.

Health effects during pregnancy and breastfeeding

Just like with tobacco and alcohol, pregnant women and those that are breastfeeding should avoid using cannabis. This is because the substances in cannabis can pass from the mother's blood to her fetus during pregnancy. They can also be passed through breast milk to a newborn child.

Travelling with Cannabis

Many of our patients ask us if they can travel with cannabis. Although cannabis is now legal in Canada, this does not change Canada's border regulations. Taking cannabis or any product containing cannabis into or out of Canada is illegal and can result in serious criminal penalties both at home and abroad.

This is the case even if you are travelling from places that have legalized or decriminalized cannabis. Transporting cannabis used for medical purposes is also illegal.

Cannabis is illegal in most countries. Previous use of cannabis, or any other substance prohibited by local law, could result in a traveler being denied entry to his or her destination country. Each country decides who can enter or exit their borders.

Although the possession of cannabis is legal in some U.S. states, it remains illegal under federal laws, therefore you cannot enter the U.S. with cannabis, in any form, *even if you are travelling to a U.S. state that has legalized possession of cannabis.*



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Your Cannabis Therapy

Your Licensed Producer:

Licensed Producer Contact Number:

Your Prescription:

Your Strain:

Your Method of Use:

Your Medical Authorization Processor (MAP):



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