

Medical Use of Cannabis and Cannabinoids

Curious about using cannabis for medical purposes? Talk with a healthcare provider.

Cannabis carries the same health and safety risks whether you're using it for medical or nonmedical purposes.



What is cannabis for medical purposes?

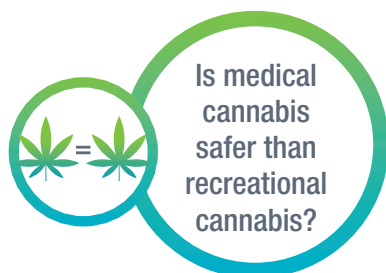
Cannabis for medical purposes: Refers to legally obtained cannabis and cannabis products (e.g., oils) that have been authorized by a healthcare provider to manage a mental or physical health condition. Cannabis for medical purposes is often called “medical cannabis.”

Prescription cannabinoids: Medications containing THC, CBD, both or a THC derivative. These medications are approved by Health Canada for specific medical conditions, have been issued a drug identification number (DIN) and require a healthcare provider's prescription.

What Are Cannabinoids?

Cannabis is a plant that contains more than 100 chemical compounds called cannabinoids. The two most well-known cannabinoids are delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and cannabidiol (CBD).

THC is the main psychoactive component of cannabis and is responsible for the “high” feeling people may get when using cannabis. CBD does not produce a “high,” but it can cause drowsiness.

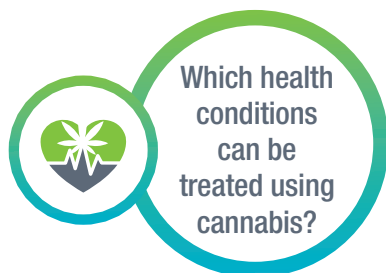


Is medical cannabis safer than recreational cannabis?

Cannabis is cannabis

Cannabis can interact with other medications that you may be taking, including prescription medications, over-the-counter medications and natural health products. Some examples include medications to manage or treat anxiety and depression, cold and flu, allergy, pain, heartburn, sleep, blood thinners, ADHD and HIV/AIDS.

When a healthcare provider authorizes cannabis, it comes directly from a designated cannabis producer. But, in terms of composition and quality, it is no different from cannabis products purchased from a cannabis retailer. Cannabis from illegal sources may come with added risks, like the presence of unauthorized pesticides, heavy metals and contaminants.



Which health conditions can be treated using cannabis?

The use of cannabis to treat most health conditions—especially as the first treatment to try—is not supported by available clinical evidence.

However, there is evidence that the use of cannabis and cannabinoids might be helpful in managing symptoms associated with *certain* health conditions.

For more information, see:

[Clearing the Smoke on Cannabis: Medical Use of Cannabis and Cannabinoids](#)

[What does research say about treating medical conditions with cannabis and cannabinoids?](#)

Talk to your healthcare provider if you're considering using cannabis for medical purposes. Learn more at ccsa.ca/cannabis.