



# CannaConnect

**VETERAN'S GUIDE**



## Mission Statement

At CannaConnect, our mission is to empower military and RCMP Veterans on their journey to wellness through medical cannabis.

We are committed to providing opportunities to engage with a supportive community through connection and conversation at our wellness lounges from coast-to-coast.

We lead with compassion and care to enable our community to learn, heal and thrive while working to end the stigma around mental health.



# Medical Cannabis

# Terminology

## THC

THC is one of the major cannabinoids found in the cannabis plant which has therapeutic potential to relieve pain, inflammation, nausea and vomiting. The effects of THC are known to be intoxicating, meaning it can produce a high and impair cognition.

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## CBD

CBD is another major cannabinoid found in cannabis that has strong medicinal properties. However, unlike THC, it causes minimal to no intoxication in the overwhelming majority of users. The research on CBD indicates that it may reduce pain, anxiety, and inflammation and is well known for its potent anti-epileptic effects (some seizure disorders).

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## Entourage Effect

The Entourage Effect refers to the synergistic interaction between the various compounds in the cannabis plant, including THC, CBD, and terpenes. These compounds can enhance or modify the effects of each individual compound and potentially produce a greater therapeutic benefit.

## Terpenes

Terpenes are aromatic compounds found in a wide variety of plants, including the cannabis plant. They are responsible for the distinct smells and flavours of different strains of cannabis. In addition to their role in the plant's scent, terpenes may also have therapeutic effects. For example, some terpenes are believed to have anti-inflammatory and stress-reducing properties.

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## Indica

Indica is a classification of cannabis that is known for its relaxing and therapeutic qualities. Scientifically, indica is referred to as *Cannabis indica*, and these strains can offer sedation (sleepiness) and relief to those suffering from chronic pain. Indica strains may help promote appetite and reduce nausea.

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## Sativa

Sativa is a classification of cannabis strains that is known to have a more stimulating effect. Many say that sativa varieties of cannabis are best used during the day as they may provide boosts of energy and can help to alleviate symptoms of depression.

# How does cannabis work?

Medical cannabis works by interacting with the body's endocannabinoid system, a network of receptors and neurotransmitters that help regulate a wide range of functions including sleep, appetite, pain, and immune system response. The active compounds in medical cannabis, including THC and CBD, bind to cannabinoid receptors in the body, activating them and triggering a range of physiological and psychological effects.

The specific effects of medical cannabis can vary depending on the specific strain and the individual patient. Some strains may be more effective for certain conditions than others, and the right strain and dosage can vary from person to person. It's always best to consult with a healthcare professional before using medical cannabis to determine the best treatment plan for you.

# Potential Therapeutic Uses of Medical Cannabis



## Neurology

- Epilepsy
  - Neuropsychiatric symptoms in neurodegenerative diseases
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## Mental Health

- PTSD
  - Anxiety
  - Depression
- 



## Pain

- Neuropathic pain
  - Chronic pain
  - Enhanced sleep through reduced pain
- 



## Oncology

- Nausea
  - Appetite stimulation
  - Enhanced pain control
- 



## General

- Anorexia
- Harm reduction
- Crohn's disease
- Insomnia

# Methods of Administration\*

## How to take your medication

There are many options when choosing a delivery method for your medical cannabis. The decision can be based on a number of things - onset time, duration of effect, or just your individual comfort level with one method over another.

### DRIED PRODUCT



#### Onset:

5-15 mins

#### Duration:

2-4 hours



#### Pros:

- Rapid onset



#### Cons:

- Duration of effect is very short - peak is usually 15-45 mins
- Typically smoked or vaporized which has adverse effects on lungs
- Less discrete than oils, capsules, or edibles

\*The timelines listed in this section are to be used only as a guide and CannaConnect reminds those using cannabis products to avoid safety sensitive activities like driving should they be under the influence of THC which has been demonstrated to impair performance.



## OIL



### Onset:

30-120 mins

### Duration:

4+ hours



### Pros:

- Very discreet
- Does not require combustion for desired effect
- Long lasting – Best for scheduled regimens
- Flexible dosing with use of syringe/dropper



### Cons:

- Longer than smoking or vaporizing to onset



## CAPSULES



### Onset:

30-120 mins

### Duration:

4+ hours



### Pros:

- Very discreet
- Does not require combustion for desired effect
- Long lasting – Best for scheduled regimens
- Precise dosing



### Cons:

- Slightly longer than smoking or vaporizing to onset



## EDIBLES



### Onset:

30-120 mins

### Duration:

4+ hours



### Pros:

- Very discreet
- Does not require combustion for desired effect
- Long lasting – Best for scheduled regimens
- Flexible dosing as edibles can be divided into halves and quarters if needed



### Cons:

- Slightly longer than smoking or vaporizing to onset
- Children may mistake for candy

## CREAMS & TOPICALS



### Onset:

Variable

### Duration:

Variable



### Pros:

- Very discreet
- Does not require combustion for desired effect
- Can be long lasting
- Good option for more localized treatment
- Minimal to no side effects



### Cons:

- Onset may take longer than smoking or vaporizing
- Effect can be inconsistent based on absorption levels



Local Oromocto Wellness Lounge



# Guidelines for Medical Cannabis Use

From Our Medical Director,  
Dr. Nick Withers

**Effects of THC:** THC is the primary component responsible for the psychoactive effects of cannabis, commonly known as the “high.” This property can be utilized therapeutically to assist with sleep, manage anxiety and panic attacks, and alleviate pain.

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**Effects of CBD:** CBD is generally more effective for managing pain and inflammation and may also provide a calming effect without sedation. Although CBD typically does not cause impairment, some users—especially those using CBD with appreciable amounts of THC —may experience mild sedative effects. Exercise caution if performing safety-sensitive tasks, such as driving or childcare. Pure CBD products generally do not cause impairment at recommended doses.

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**Indica Strains:** Indica strains are often found to be relaxing and are typically preferred for nighttime use due to their stronger sedative effects, making them less suitable for daytime use.

**Sativa Strains:** Sativa strains are commonly associated with an energizing effect and are generally preferred for daytime use. Some patients with anxiety may find that sativa strains can increase anxiety symptoms.

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**Smoking and Vaping:** Smoking or vaping provides rapid relief but is associated with potential health risks, including lung problems and potential increased risk of deep vein thrombosis, heart attacks, and strokes. Inhaled forms of cannabis tend to act quickly but wear off sooner; however, individual experience will vary.

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**Oral Forms (Oils, Capsules, and Edibles):** These forms of cannabis generally take longer to take effect (45–120 minutes) and are better suited to scheduled treatment plans. CBD in oral form is typically more effective for maintaining a consistent level of pain control than inhaled forms.

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**Starting Dosage:** Begin with a low dose and gradually increase, especially with THC. Dosage adjustments should be made every 2–3 days until the desired effect is achieved, side effects become problematic, or a set limit is reached. CBD may be increased more rapidly due to its lower side effect profile, although some CBD products contain THC, which may cause impairment.

**Tolerance and Product Rotation:** Some patients may develop tolerance over time. To prevent this, consider rotating to a different product with similar THC/CBD levels or a similar strain (indica or sativa) every 2–3 months for a few weeks. However, some patients may remain on the same regimen for extended periods without experiencing tolerance issues.

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**Medication Adjustments for Working Individuals:** If you are employed, make any changes to your cannabis product, dosage, or frequency during times when you are not working, or required to be mentally alert, as these adjustments may produce unexpected side effects.

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**Legal & Workplace Compliance:** Employees are responsible for complying with the law and workplace policies regarding cannabis use, including the use of CBD. Be sure to familiarize yourself with your employer's policies as it is not possible for our staff to be familiar with employer policies and cannot take responsibility for providing guidance in this area.

**Dosage Awareness:** Patients sometimes focus on the number of capsules, syringes, or pills taken, but the total milligrams (mg) of THC or CBD ingested is more critical. Similar to alcohol, where a light beer has less impact than the same sized glass of straight vodka, cannabis products vary significantly in potency. Some capsules may contain as little as 2.5 mg of THC, while others exceed 10 mg. As THC is more likely to cause impairment than CBD, it is important to monitor the total milligrams being consumed.

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**Driving and THC Use:** Avoid driving or operating machinery under the influence of THC. Despite some individuals claiming improved performance with cannabis, research does not support these claims.

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**Health Risks:** There is a weak association between cannabis use and conditions such as heart disease and psychosis. Consider these potential risks carefully and discuss them with your physician at each appointment if you have concerns or your health has changed.

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**Informing Healthcare Providers:** Inform your primary care physician and any specialists of your medicinal cannabis use to prevent possible interactions with other medications. With your consent, we can provide a copy of your clinical record to your healthcare providers.

**Taking Cannabis with Food:** For optimal absorption, consider taking cannabis oil or capsules with chocolate milk (2% fat is recommended), as fat enhances absorption, and the chocolate flavor may mask the oil's taste. There is no significant benefit to holding the oil in the mouth before swallowing, as sublingual absorption is minimal. We suggest drinking a small amount of milk, quickly swallowing the oil, and then drinking more milk.

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**Safe Storage:** Store cannabis products securely, as even small amounts can be toxic to children. In cases of accidental ingestion by a child, emergency room personnel may be required to involve social services.





Local New Minas Wellness Lounge



Local Lower Sackville Wellness Lounge



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# VAC Coverage & Registration

# Who Has Coverage?

At this time, Military and RCMP Veterans with an awarded or pensioned condition are eligible for medical cannabis coverage.

## ✓ **Military/RCMP Veterans**

In order to get coverage as a Military or RCMP Veteran you will need to provide the following documents and information;

- 01 Summary of Assessment and or a Decision Letter that states awarded/pensioned conditions with the percentage. (If you do not yet have a pensioned condition, please submit a medical document stating a diagnosis)
- 02 Copy of your Medavie Blue Cross card
- 03 Release date
- 04 Licensed Producer of choice



## First Responders

First Responders do not have coverage for medical cannabis at the moment, however, some Licensed Producers will offer a discount to still serving and retired First Responders.



## Still Serving

Those who are still serving are not eligible for medical cannabis coverage, however, Licensed Producers like Aurora offer a discount to all still serving members.

\*You will need to provide your service card/work ID in order to be eligible for First Responder or Still Serving discounts.



# Exemption Letters

All Veterans are covered by Blue Cross for up to 3 grams (per day) of medical cannabis determined by their prescribing physician. In order to receive an exemption for above 3 grams per day, VAC requires additional documentation from a medical specialist with expertise in the condition for which the Veteran is using cannabis. ( I.e. OSI/ Chronic Pain). Currently this requires reassessment every 2 years.

If you are in need of an exemption, please reach out and we can discuss the process. You can speak to the clinic manager at your Local Wellness Lounge or you can email [info@cannaconnect.ca](mailto:info@cannaconnect.ca) at any time.

## How to Register

### 3 Easy Steps

- 01 Get Started** Visit [cannaconnect.ca](http://cannaconnect.ca) and fill out our short intake form. A team member will contact you to gather your documentation.
- 02 Book Appointment** Once your documents are ready, we'll schedule a consultation with a medical professional to explore your treatment options.
- 03 Access Treatment** We'll submit everything to your Licensed Producer to ensure you receive your medication and coverage.

We will handle all the paperwork on your behalf.

You will be contacted by the Licensed Producer to register, apply for coverage, and place your first order.

Orders will be shipped directly to your home using Canada Post or Purolator.

We're here to support you throughout the entire process and beyond!





Local Edmonton Wellness Lounge







# Wellness Lounges



## Locations

01 Victoria, BC

04 Saskatoon, SK

02 Cloverdale, BC

05 Winnipeg, MB

03 Edmonton, AB

06 Trenton, ON



07 Kingston, ON

11 Saint John, NB

08 Ottawa, ON

12 Lower Sackville, NS

09 Petawawa, ON

13 New Minas, NS

10 Oromocto, NB

14 St. John's, NL



Local Trenton Wellness Lounge







We collaborate with and support Veteran groups such as Guitars for Heroes



# About Us

Our nation-wide community is dedicated to empowering military and RCMP Veterans on their journey to wellness through medical cannabis.

With 14 Wellness Lounges across the country, we are committed to providing opportunities for Canadian Veterans to engage and reconnect with like-minded individuals who are in the pursuit of health and wellness.

We have a network of doctors and specialists who understand the unique needs of Canadian Veterans, and are proud to help them gain access to medical cannabis and cannabis education.

We know the important role that community and connection play in mental health. Whether it be a quick drop-in for a cup of coffee, a family-friendly BBQ, or a place to kick back and unwind—CannaConnect is a safe and supportive space for the Veteran community to improve and heal oneself, learn from one-another, grow, and thrive together.



# Event Types

At the core of CannaConnect is our belief in the power of community for emotional and mental health support. Our Wellness Lounges across the country are a testament to that belief and offer Military and RCMP Veterans a place to connect with others who share experiences and understanding.

Our Wellness Lounges host a range of events on a weekly basis. All information can be found on our website at [www.cannaconnect.ca/events](http://www.cannaconnect.ca/events)

## You can expect events like:

✓ Regular Peer-Support

✓ Yoga

✓ Music Night

✓ BBQs

✓ Movie Night

✓ Family Night

✓ Sporting Activities

✓ And many more!



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# FAQs

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## How do I register to be a patient?

**Intake Form** Visit our website at [cannaconnect.ca](http://cannaconnect.ca) and complete our short intake form

**Book Appointment** A member of our team will help you gather your documentation and schedule you an appointment.

**Consult Specialist** You will speak with one of our medical professionals to determine the best treatment for you.

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## How do I know if I am eligible for medical cannabis coverage?

If you are a fully released military or RCMP Veteran covered by Blue Cross, you may be eligible for medical cannabis coverage. It is best to speak with your case manager or call our team of Patient Care Representatives for more information.

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## Are appointments in person or virtual?

Appointments are virtual and are done on a telemedicine platform. However, you are welcome to come to any of our offices to take your appointment from there.

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## Do I need a doctor's referral?

You do not need a doctor's referral to become a client. We accept both self-referrals and referrals from health care professionals. Once you have registered with CannaConnect, you will have the opportunity to consult with one of our healthcare specialists who have an in-depth understanding of conditions such as PTSD and chronic pain and are very well versed in medical cannabis treatment options.

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## What will I need for my appointment?

Prior to your first appointment you will need to complete our intake questionnaire as well as a copy of your provincial health card (e.g., OHIP), photo ID, and a list of medications that you are currently taking.

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## Can I visit a lounge at any time?

Wellness Lounges have an open-door policy during business hours! Our Wellness Lounges are located coast-to-coast and were created with the intention of offering Veterans a space that they can drop-in to unwind and connect with others in the community. To find out the business hours of your Local Wellness Lounge, visit [cannaconnect.ca/locations](https://cannaconnect.ca/locations)

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## **Are appointments free?**

Yes, appointments are free for Veterans.

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## **How often will I have an appointment?**

The number of appointments you have will be based on the duration of the medical document (prescription) you receive. During your consultation, our practitioners will discuss the follow-up requirements.

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## **Can CannaConnect help me get an exemption letter?**

Yes! For clients who may benefit from more than 3 grams per day, CannaConnect can arrange a specialist assessment for an exemption letter for coverage.

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## **How do I order my medical cannabis?**

Following your appointment with one of our healthcare specialists, your medical authorization will be sent to a licensed producer of your choice. Once the LP processes your medical document (typically 1-3 business days), you will be notified and may begin ordering your medical cannabis online through their website or via telephone.



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[CANNACONNECT.CA](https://cannacollective.ca)

888.779.8462

