

Safe Use

- do not drive or operate heavy machinery if *impaired* by cannabis (indicas can be especially sedating)
- cannabis mixed with alcohol may cause vomiting/nausea
- those receiving digitalis or other cardiac medications should only use cannabis under strict supervision by a medical doctor
- when eating cannabis preparations we strongly recommend starting with a small bite, waiting 90 minutes and increasing amount if needed
- the effects of edible cannabis products may be more psychoactive than smoking, and/or cause extreme muscle relaxation
- **we recommend choosing organic cannabis whenever possible,** especially for people with compromised immune systems.

Side Effects

- cannabis may cause dizziness due to lowered blood pressure
- cannabis may cause a decrease in coordination and cognition, and short-term memory loss while medicated
- heart rate and/or blood pressure may increase initially which may be problematic for those with heart conditions or severe anxiety

To Smoke or To Eat

Many of cannabis's active ingredients are extractable in fat and alcohol from which baked goods and tinctures can be made to provide relief to those who are unable to smoke or eat cannabis. The flower ('bud') is the most potent part of the plant, the leaves ('shake') and stems are less potent. The 'bud' is preferable for smoking since less must be smoked in order to have the desired effect, and burnt plant matter can cause respiratory irritation if inhaled excessively. The 'shake' is preferable for baking since it is less costly and its potency is increased by this mode of ingestion. The 'shake' may also be used to make tinctures or teas, and the stems may be used to make tea.

- The **effects of smoking cannabis** are usually felt within the first ten minutes and the effects may last from 30 minutes to 3 hours. Modes of smoking include: rolled (joints), pipe, water-pipe, vaporiser ... ask us for more information about these and others.
- The **effects of ingested cannabis** may be felt within the first 15 minutes to 2 hours (if the stomach is full the effects may take longer) and may last for 2-8 hours. Effects from baked goods and tinctures vary depending on what strain was used for the preparation, but tend to be similar to those of Indicas, and are very pronounced.

- **effects vary from person to person** -

The Vancouver Island Compassion Society



Effective Use of Medical Cannabis

Phone: (250) 381-8427

Fax: (250) 381-8423

E-mail: info@thevics.com

Web: www.thevics.com

Active Ingredients

Cannabis contains 60+ different types of cannabinoids.

The main active ingredient is **delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC)**. THC has euphoric, stimulant, muscle-relaxing, anti-epileptic, anti-emetic, appetite stimulating, bronchiodilating, hypotensive, anti-depressant, and analgesic effects.

High potency cannabis contains at least 15% THC. **Cannabidiol (CBD)** has sedative and analgesic effects. **Cannabinol (CBN)** is mildly psychoactive; one of its effects is to lower intra-ocular pressure. CBN also has anti-epileptic effects. **Cannabigerol (CBG)** has sedative and antibiotic effects, as well as lowering intraocular pressure. **Cannabichromene (CBC)** has sedative effects and promotes the analgesic effects of THC.

(Marijuana Medicine, Christian Ratsch, 2001)

Cannabis Sativa

Generally the sativa plant is the taller and lankier variety. It is characterized by narrow serrated leaves and loose spear like flower clusters that can be extremely resinous.

Primarily the effects of sativas are on the mind and emotions. In this regard they tend to be more **stimulating, uplifting, energizing and enhance creativity**. These benefits can be particularly helpful for the psychological component of many illnesses.

Sativas are generally good for daytime use and appetite stimulation, but they can increase stress/anxiety in some users.

Some benefits of sativas:

- reduces depression
- relieves headaches and migraines
- energizing, uplifting
- may reduce awareness of pain
- reduces nausea
- stimulates appetite
- immunological support
- expectorant

Cannabis Indica

Indica plants are normally shorter and stockier plants, with wide deeply serrated leaves and a compact and dense flower cluster.

The effects of indicas are predominantly physical although they can also be used to reduce stress and anxiety. These effects can be characterized as **relaxing, sedating, and pain reducing**.

Indicas are generally good for later in the day and before bed.

Some benefits of indicas:

- reduces pain
- relaxes brain centres and muscle
- reduces inflammation
- aids sleep
- sedative/reduces anxiety
- reduces nausea
- stimulates appetite
- relieves headaches and migraines
- reduces intra-ocular pressure
- anti-convulsant
- reduces seizure frequency
- expectorant

Strain Crosses

Cross strains are the result of cross-pollination of various strains. Usually one strain will be dominant. Effects tend to reflect the dominant strain.

For example, Indica dominant crosses are good for pain relief, with the Sativa component helping to remain active. Sativa dominant crosses are good for stimulating appetite, with the Indica component helping to reduce body pain and increase relaxation.

Selecting the Best Strain & Dosage for You

The medicinal efficacy of cannabis is directly related to strain selection, therefore we recommend care be taken in selecting appropriate strains to meet your needs.

Through experience we are starting to identify particular varieties that are effective for sleep, pain, appetite and energy and for specific illnesses such as Multiple Sclerosis.

Potency also varies. You will need to smoke less high-potency cannabis to reach the desired effect. In terms of dosage, the idea is to smoke as little as possible. This helps reduce cost and prevents the build up of a tolerance.

If you do find yourself needing to smoke more in order to achieve the desired effect, reducing or stopping intake for a time, or changing variety, may reduce your effective dosage level.

- effects vary from person to person -