

How Do Doctors Recommend Taking Medical Cannabis?

Outside of the plant-based medical field, when thinking about cannabis use, most people will get an image inspired by television or movies of a person smoking the plant to get “high”. Naturally, this is a turn-off for many patients because, firstly, these films instill negative associations regarding how these people are seen in society and secondly, smoking is bad for you.



Thankfully, no doctor specializing in treatment using medicinal cannabis will ever recommend it be smoked.

We have gathered some of the most frequently asked questions to help break some common myths and bring to light how medicinal cannabis is actually prescribed by doctors and used by patients. Below we endeavor to answer these questions in as much detail as possible so that you can feel comfortable and confident before seeking out this treatment.

How can you take medical cannabis?

As we touched on above, the smoking of medicinal cannabis is never advised by doctors. In fact, doctors find great pleasure in successfully converting patients from the use of smoking cannabis to vaping; it is referred to as 'harm minimization'. Smoking, in any form, releases toxic compounds which can damage the lungs and cause uncomfortable side effects such as coughing, sputum and bronchitis.

Instead, there are a variety of alternative ways that medical cannabis can be used. The two primary methods are:

Oral

Most often, patients will receive a prescription for [medicinal cannabis](#) that can be taken orally. Oral solutions come in the form of capsules, oil drops and sprays.

Vaporisation

Using a special device called a vaporizer, patients can inhale the vapor from the cannabis flower to get its effects. Unlike smoking, these devices heat the cannabis flower and release the cannabinoids into a vapor. Patients simply inhale. This vapor "smoke" is not the result of burning the flower. Thus, it does not release toxic compounds as smoking does.

Topical creams, patches or gels can also be prescribed. These are for direct application and can have some therapeutic benefits, but they are not so commonly used.

What's the most common way doctors recommend taking medical cannabis?

Cannabis specialist doctors work closely with patients to understand their illness or ailments, as well as their medical history and current prescriptions. The means by which doctors recommend patients take medicinal cannabis will, depend on the clinical indication, as well as the preference of the patient.

Where possible, doctors want their patients to feel comfortable, both in the effects of the treatment as well as how it is taken. We mentioned above the two most common ways to use medicinal cannabis. Below we will look at how these two ways of taking medicinal cannabis work on the body to paint a picture of what scenarios may apply to which kind of treatment.

Oral treatments

Oral treatments, any kind of [medicinal cannabis](#) solution which is taken orally and absorbed in the stomach, are slow-releasing treatments. After an oral treatment has been taken, it can take somewhere between 30 and 90 minutes for any effects to be felt and then it has long-lasting therapeutic effects. The peak of the effects can be felt around two to four hours after being taken, and the total length of time where patients can still feel the treatment is up to eight hours. For this reason, many patients commence on a regime of morning and night doses, so as to last throughout the day as well as while they sleep.

Vaporisation treatments

Vaporized medicinal cannabis is absorbed differently from oral treatments. Inhaling vapor bypasses the digestive process, and instead, it is absorbed in the lungs. Because it is not metabolized in the same way through the stomach, it is absorbed much faster in the body, and the effects are felt very soon after use. The effects of vaporization will typically be felt within 90 seconds and reach the full peak of the effect in just 15 to 30 minutes. The total time effects are felt from vaporization is between two to four hours. Just as the effects release quickly, they will also pass quickly – when compared to oral treatments.

For more details: www.medicannahealth.com.au