

How to Use Oral Cannabis

If you or someone you know uses oral cannabis as medicine, you may be surprised by the following information.

Eating medical cannabis produces different effects than smoking it.

Smoking delivers delta-9-THC, the psychoactive drug found in cannabis, to the brain within minutes. When eaten, the liver metabolizes delta-9-THC, before it reaches the bloodstream. When eaten, some delta-9-THC is destroyed by stomach acids and by this liver metabolism, while the rest is converted into a potent THC metabolite: delta-11-hydroxy-THC, which exhibits different drug effects than delta-9-THC. This is why oral cannabis feels different than smoked cannabis.

Raw cannabis is not psychoactive.

Raw cannabis flowers and extracts contain their THC in the form of an acid: THCA. Heating cannabis converts THCA from its acidic form into its neutral form: THC. This process is called decarboxylation. Smoking, cooking or vaporizing heats cannabis and this decarboxylation takes place. Recently, evidence has emerged that indicates that THCA, which is not psychoactive, may actually produce some medicinal effects, just without psychoactivity. Doses of THC below those that cause psychoactivity may be medicinally useful, as well. When decarboxylating cannabis, care must be taken to avoid overheating, which converts THC into CBN, a much less potent medicine.

Overmedicating on oral cannabis is common.

Start with a small dose of oral cannabis. Ask your Abatin counselor for tips on using oral delivery cannabis products. Overmedication can result in hallucinations and acute anxiety. One-gram of average medical cannabis flowers contain around 150mg of THCA, but the actual amount can range from 20mg to 300mg. Depending on how efficiently the THCA is decarboxylated, when used in edible form the actual dosage of available THC can vary widely. Choose an oral cannabis medicine with a known and consistent content of THC.

Oral cannabis effects take longer to be felt and last longer.

It can take as long as four hours to feel the effects of oral cannabis. Always wait for the effects to completely manifest before taking another dose. Studies with patients indicate that patients' absorption of oral cannabis varies widely, almost by a factor of three. This means that with the same dose, one patient may absorb three times more THC.

If you'd like to learn more about the latest developments in the science of medical cannabis, visit Abatin Wellness Center of Sacramento. Call us at (916) 822-5699 or visit us online at abatinsacramento.com.