

# Mindful Recovery Medicinal Cannabis Support

## What Is Medicinal Cannabis?

Cannabis is a genus of the flowering plant in the family *cannabaceae* divided into 3 species—*Cannabis sativa*, *Cannabis indica*, and *Cannabis ruderalis* with a long history of medicinal use.

In Australia, medicinal cannabis refers to a range of quality assured, pharmaceutical cannabis preparations intended for therapeutic use. With more than 150 different medical cannabis products available for prescription in Victoria including capsules, wafers, oral oils, and dried herb extracts for vapourisation.

Mindful Recovery supports the use of approved plant-based medications to treat symptoms.

## Is Medical Cannabis Legal in Victoria?

Accessing medical cannabis in Victoria has been legal since 2016. Access is regulated by the TGA and Victorian State Health. In Victoria, medical cannabis (including CBD oil) is only available as a prescription from a doctor/Nurse Practitioner for any patient (16 years+) with any condition, if the Doctor/Nurse Practitioner believe it is clinically appropriate to do so.

## Legal Medical Cannabis Vs illegal Marijuana

Legal medical cannabis products are tested by regulatory authorities to ensure quality & safety control. These products must abide by strict quality standards while “green” market products are often mislabelled contain harmful substances such as; moulds, bacteria, fungus, toxins, heavy metals, and pesticides for reduced side effects.

Due to increased competition, regulated, legal cannabis products are cheaper if not the same price as “green” market products.

## Medicinal Cannabis products are categorised:

- CBD products (containing mostly CBD)
- Balanced (containing equal parts CBD and THC)
- THC products (containing mostly THC)

## What Can Medicinal Cannabis be Prescribed to Treat?

Medicinal cannabis is not considered a first-line therapy for any indication. A requirement for TGA approval is that the client has utilised mainstream medications/therapies/treatments for a minimum of three months with minimal/negative effects before medicinal cannabis is considered.

### Conditions may include but are not limited to:

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), anxiety, depression, Sleep disturbances, cancer pain & symptom management, non- cancer pain, neuropathic pain, Spasticity, Tourette's Syndrome, Ulcerative colitis, Crohn's Disease, PTSD, epilepsy, fibromyalgia, inflammation, inflammatory Bowel Disease, Migraines, Multiple Sclerosis (MS), nausea & Vomiting, Parkinson's Disease, Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS), seizure management, cannabis used disorder, cerebral palsy (CP), Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS), endometriosis, Poly Cystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS).

There are many other potential uses for cannabis-derived treatments, with new applications being investigated in current clinical studies.

Medicinal Prescribing Guidelines advises that medicinal cannabis products containing THC are generally **not appropriate** for client's who:

- Have or family member has a diagnosis of schizophrenia
- Recent (past 6 months) episode of psychosis
- Currently pregnant, planning on becoming pregnant, or breastfeeding.
- Unstable cardiovascular, liver &/or kidney disease.

Clients are advised that they are not recommended to drive or operate heavy machinery while treated with medicinal cannabis.

Clients are informed that measurable concentrations of THC can be detected in saliva for many hours after administration.

The Nurse Practitioner at Mindful Recovery is approved to prescribe and manage medicinal cannabis products for clients including the application for the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) for pharmacy to dispense legally to clients.

If your regular doctor is unwilling to prescribe, you can book in directly with the Mindful Recovery Nurse Practitioner.

6-8 weekly review consultations are carried out with the Nurse Practitioner to review product effects & dosage or product alterations required.

Positive treatment outcomes are reached with an empathetic, non-judgemental & committed approach.

### **How Much Does Medicinal Cannabis cost?**

Medicinal cannabis is not currently subsidised by the Commonwealth Government through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), meaning that the full cost must be paid by the client to the dispensing pharmacy.

Depending on the product/s that are prescribed the prices vary. For example:

Dried herb (flower) for vaporisation ranges from \$13.00 - \$25.00 per gram.

CBD, THC or Balanced CBD/THC oils range from \$5.00- \$20.00 per 10mls.

Pricing all products are provided during consultation.

*\* Prices correct at time of writing 19/01/2023*

Medicinal Cannabis products are not currently listed on the TGA Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG) & Commonwealth approval is therefore required.

### **Can a client fly with Medical Cannabis in Australia?**

The only legal requirement is that you can prove your medication is lawfully prescribed.

- Ensure the product you are taking with you is a legal, medical cannabis product and that you have support for that product in the form of a prescription (physical or digital).
- Ensure medication is in the original, labelled packaging with your name, prescriber's name, and dosage.
- Copy of TGA approval letter.
- Prescriber letter of support, outlining the medications prescribed, dosage and the product formulation (oil vs flower) & if you have a vape, list the vape along with the vape serial number.

## References

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