

Medical Cannabis: New Patient Resources

Pain management remains one of the most common challenges that people with arthritis face. Many options, such as opioids or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), have adverse side effects that make them ineffective or undesirable for long-term use managing symptoms of a chronic condition. This has contributed to growing interest in the use of medical cannabis to help manage pain and other arthritis symptoms.

If patients are asking you about their pain management options, or are curious about medical cannabis, the Arthritis Society's newly updated medical cannabis resources can be a great way to start an informed discussion.

The resources—found at arthritis.ca/medicalcannabis—were produced in consultation with rheumatologist Dr. Carolina Landolt-Marticorena, and feature content from noted pain researcher Dr. Jason MacDougall.

Incorporating video, infographics and text in an interactive experience, patients can explore the science behind the use of cannabis for medical purposes, potential benefits and risks, how to access the drug, and common questions like the difference between THC and CBD or the variety of delivery modes — including newly legal oils, extracts and edibles. For patients with more in-depth questions, a robust online learning module is also available from this page, or directly on our e-learning platform at arthritis.ca/education.



Cannabis is a flowering plant that produces chemicals called **cannabinoids**, which can be used to treat the symptoms of a number of conditions, including arthritis.

MEDICAL CANNABIS	RECREATIONAL CANNABIS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Used to address symptoms of various health conditionsDosing can be indicated so that there is little to no euphoric effect ("high")Requires medical document (authorization)Accessed directly from a Health Canada Licensed Producer or grown by consumer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Used for non-medical purposesGenerally used for euphoric effect ("high")Not a safe substitute for supervised careAccessed from an authorized recreational cannabis retailer or grown by consumer

1. MEDICAL CANNABIS AND ARTHRITIS



Cannabinoids interact with our body's **endocannabinoid** system, which can affect inflammation, immune function, appetite, heart function, memory, and mood.

While medical cannabis can't cure arthritis or slow disease progression, there are studies that demonstrate it can help relieve arthritis pain as well as address sleep issues and anxiety.