



CANNABIS  
CLINIC

[www.cannabisclinic.co.nz](http://www.cannabisclinic.co.nz)

# Doctor Prescribing Guide Cannabidiol (CBD) 2019



Dear Dr and colleague,

Your patient has recently expressed interest in trying Cannabidiol (CBD) oil. This pack is here to assist you in the process.

1. CBD is available as a prescription medication from any GP. It does not require specialist endorsement.
2. We encourage you to try CBD; it has a very good safety profile and can be self-titrated by the patient. It is however an unapproved medicine.

If you have any feedback or feel unprepared to help your patient with this, please provide a referral letter back to us.

Regards,  
Cannabis Clinic



## One Page Quick Summary

### **1. What is CBD and is it legal?**

Cannabidiol (CBD) is an extract of the Cannabis plant and does not cause a high. CBD is a prescription medication by any NZ registered doctor and does not require specialist or ministerial approval.

### **2. I don't believe in CBD. Does it work?**

CBD has shown potential benefit with epilepsy, chronic pain, anxiety, nausea and insomnia. Studies are inconclusive but patient satisfaction is high.

Sativex is a combination of CBD and THC and approved in NZ for treating spasticity with MS. CBD is an FDA approved drug in treating seizures with specific childhood epilepsy conditions.

### **3. What are the side effects?**

No deaths have been documented from CBD. It is non addictive. Somnolence, reduced appetite, diarrhoea, fatigue are the most common side effects (1).

### **4. What dose should I use?**

For chronic pain, a good starting point is 25mg PO OD.

### **5. I do not wish to prescribe it, what should I do?**

Please provide your patient a generic referral letter and request they contact us and we can aid your patient in this journey.



## The Cannabis Plant



***Cannabis Sativa* plant  
contains chemicals  
called cannabinoids**

**CBD**

**THC**

### **Cannabidiol**

**Does not cause a high**

**Prescribable by any NZ  
doctor**

**CBD is an FDA approved  
drug in treating seizures  
associated with Lennox-  
Gastaut Syndrome and  
Dravet Syndrome in  
patients aged >2 (1)**

### **Tetrahydrocannabinol**

**Creates the cannabis high**

**Recreational and medicinal  
use**

**Sativex is a combination of  
THC and CBD and is  
approved in NZ for the  
treatment of spasticity  
associated with MS**

(1) [https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/drugsatfda\\_docs/label/2018/210365lbl.pdf](https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/drugsatfda_docs/label/2018/210365lbl.pdf)

## Is CBD Legal?

**The Misuse of Drugs Act (Medicinal Cannabis) Amendment Act has now made CBD a legally prescribable medication by a registered NZ doctor (2,3)**

**CBD does not require specialist or ministerial approval for it to be prescribed**

**CBD does not need to be prescribed on a controlled drug script**

**CBD is an unapproved medicine and is therefore under section 29 of The Medicines Act**

**Prescribing products that contain THC is more complex under current law. Specialist approval is required**

(2) <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/regulation-health-and-disability-system/medicines-control/medicinal-cannabis/misuse-drugs-medicinal-cannabis-amendment-act>

(3) [https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/chair\\_cabinet\\_business\\_committee\\_medicinal\\_cannabis\\_100\\_day\\_action.pdf](https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/chair_cabinet_business_committee_medicinal_cannabis_100_day_action.pdf)



## **Benefits of CBD**

**CBD has shown anti-epileptic properties and most of the evidence is for this benefit. 2018 saw the first FDA approved CBD product for specific types of epilepsy: Epidiolex**

**CBD has demonstrated good evidence of its role in reducing pain and this is the most common indication for use (4)**

**CBD may also have anxiolytic, anti-inflammatory, neuroprotective, anti-psychotic and anti-tumour properties. These are unproven benefits and are based on preliminary evidence (5)**

**CBD has many potential benefits but lack of research means definitive statements cannot be made**

(4) Cannabinoids for medical use. A systematic review and meta-analysis. Whiting et al, JAMA, 2015; 313(24):2456-2473

(5) Cannabidiol (CBD) critical review report. World Health Organization, expert committee on drug dependence fortieth meeting, Geneva 4-7 June 2018

## Dosing of CBD

There are no definitive guidelines on dosing. Most common practise is to titrate up slowly. We suggest starting at 12.5mg daily in adults and increasing weekly according to response. Maximum dose is generally accepted to be about 1200mg/day, but higher doses have been used up to 20mg/kg/day (1)

### Suggested initial dosing for chronic pain:

		Weight				
		40-50kg	50-70kg	70-90kg	100-120kg	>120kg
Pain	Mild	5mg	7.5mg	10mg	12.5mg	15mg
	Moderate	10mg	15mg	20mg	25mg	30mg
	Severe	15mg	22.5mg	30mg	37.5mg	45mg

## Side Effects

**CBD has not caused any documented cases of death due to toxicity**

**Most common: somnolence, reduced appetite, diarrhoea, fatigue, asthenia, rash, skin infections, transaminase elevation (1)**

**CBD is not addictive and has no dependence abuse potential (5)**

## Monitoring

**CBD is metabolized by CYP450 enzyme. Higher doses of CBD along with other CYP enzyme inhibitors (mainly anti epileptics, e.g. sodium valproate) makes it important to check LFT's prior to commencing. Patients with hepatic impairment will need dose adjustment. This is relevant for high dosing only i.e. >200mg/day.**





## Sample Script

Patient Name  
DOB  
NHI  
Address

Rx - Tilray CBD 25

1ml PO nocte

3 X 30ml bottle

Signed:

*Dr M.J Adams*

NZMC# 123456

**It is easiest to hand write the script as generally the products are not part of the Medtech database**

**If you are not happy to prescribe, kindly provide your patient a referral letter and we can refer them to an affiliated prescriber**

## Products and Costs

**Tilray is currently the main CBD product available on the market**

**With a prescription, your patient can pick this up from any pharmacy**

**Most pharmacies will charge:**  
\$200 / bottle for CBD 25mg  
\$460/bottle for CBD 100mg

Pricing is pharmacy specific and patients are advised to check with their local pharmacy





For any questions or feedback, please contact us:

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