

PATIENT INFORMATION



Botanical
HEALTH DISPENSARY

This leaflet is intended for general educational purposes only and does not replace personalised medical advice from your doctor, pharmacist, or healthcare professional. Medical cannabis products should only be used as prescribed and in accordance with current UK regulations. Always read the patient information leaflet supplied with your medication and consult your healthcare provider if you have any questions, side effects, or concerns

This leaflet is not specific to the product that you have been prescribed but has general information about Cannabis Based Medicinal Products (CBMPs) which may be helpful. If you have any specific concerns, please contact us or your prescriber to discuss them.



Introduction to Medical Cannabis

Medical cannabis involves chemicals extracted from the cannabis plant for medicinal use. The two primary compounds are:

- **CBD (Cannabidiol)**: Known for calming effects; it does not cause a "high".
- **THC (Tetrahydrocannabinol)**: The psychoactive component that can alter mood and perception.

Legal Status: In the UK, medical cannabis was legalised for prescription in 2018. It is a controlled drug and is typically only prescribed when traditional treatments have not been effective.

Note on "Unlicensed" Products: CBMPs are classed as "unlicensed" medicines. They have not undergone the same safety and efficacy testing as traditional licensed medicines.

Medical cannabis has shown promise in providing relief from **chronic pain, improving sleep, reducing inflammation**, and alleviating symptoms of mental health conditions like **anxiety and depression**. Its use is particularly noted in conditions that have not responded well to conventional treatments such as refractory **epilepsy** in children. Clinical research is ongoing to better understand the full scope and efficacy of medical cannabis in various medical contexts. It is prescribed in various forms, such as oils, capsules and pastilles.

Your prescriber and ourselves will ensure you have all the necessary information to make an informed decision about your treatment. Your prescriber will discuss the benefits and risks in the context of your specific health situation, prior to writing a prescription.

It may be useful to keep a copy of your prescription with you to prove that you have the product on prescription. **ALWAYS** keep it in its original packaging, showing the dispensing label with your name on it.

Prescriptions are valid for 28 days from the date they are written and must be received by the patient within the 28 days.

Understanding Risks & Side Effects

It is crucial to inform us and your prescriber of all medications you are taking to avoid adverse interactions. It is also highly recommended to let your GP know that you are being prescribed these products so that your NHS records are accurate and ensure safety of any medications they may prescribe you in the future. This will NOT affect the care you receive from the NHS in any way.

Like any medication, medical cannabis comes with potential risks and side effects. It is important to understand these as part of making an informed decision.

Do not use these products if you:

- Are allergic to cannabis, THC, CBD or any other ingredients listed on your product label.
- Are pregnant or breastfeeding.
- Have any history of psychosis or schizophrenia.
- Are taking cannabis products recreationally.
- Have a current active dependence, including alcohol, prescription drugs or illegal drugs.
- Have severe/unstable cardiopulmonary issues such as angina, Peripheral Vascular Disease, Cardiovascular Disease, arrhythmias, or risk factors for these.

Precautions:

Please discuss with your prescriber, prior to starting treatment if you:

- Have severe kidney or liver disease.
- Have previous drug dependence (including alcohol or nicotine)
- Are planning a pregnancy
- Are taking any other medications, prescribed, over the counter or other.
- Are elderly (the way the body handles medications may be altered in older people)
- Never share your medication with anyone else

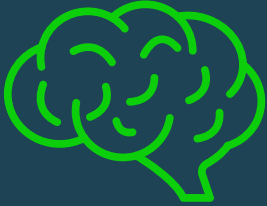
Managing Side Effects

Your prescriber will take a proactive approach to manage side effects:

- Personalised Dosage:** Starting with a low dose and adjusting gradually helps minimise side effects.
- Regular Monitoring:** Follow-up appointments are used to check for any side effects and adjust treatment, as necessary.
- Open Communication:** We encourage patients to report any side effects immediately, no matter how minor they may seem.
- Side effects** are most likely to occur at the start of treatment and following a dose change. Usually these are mild and settle down within a few days. Most commonly, 1 in 10 people may experience dizziness or tiredness.

UNDERSTANDING RISKS & SIDE EFFECTS

LESS COMMON IMPACTING LESS THAN 1 IN 10 PEOPLE



1. Problems with concentration/memory



2. Blurred vision



3. Changes in appetite



4. Changes in bowel habits



5. Nausea

UNDERSTANDING RISKS & SIDE EFFECTS

LESS COMMON IMPACTING LESS THAN 1 IN 10 PEOPLE



6. Changes in taste / dry mouth



7. Lack of energy



8. Loss of balance



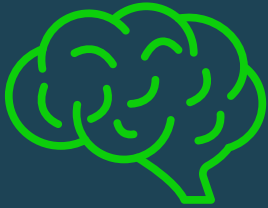
9. Feeling confused or depressed



10. Seek advice if side effects continue

UNDERSTANDING RISKS & SIDE EFFECTS

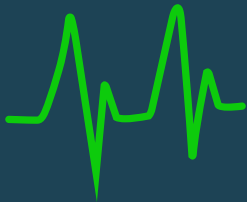
UNCOMMON IMPACTING LESS THAN 1 IN 100 PEOPLE



1. Hallucinations (visual and / or aural)



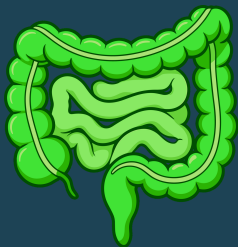
2. Believing ideas that are not true



3. Changes in pulse rate or blood pressure



4. Suicidal thoughts



5. Stomach Pains

PLEASE CONTACT US OR YOUR PRESCRIBER IF YOU EXPERIENCE UNEXPECTED SIDE EFFECTS. THESE MAY ALSO BE REPORTED TO THE NATIONAL DATABASE BY COMPLETING A 'YELLOW CARD' AT [HTTPS://YELLOWCARD.MHRA.GOV.UK/](https://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/).

DRIVING

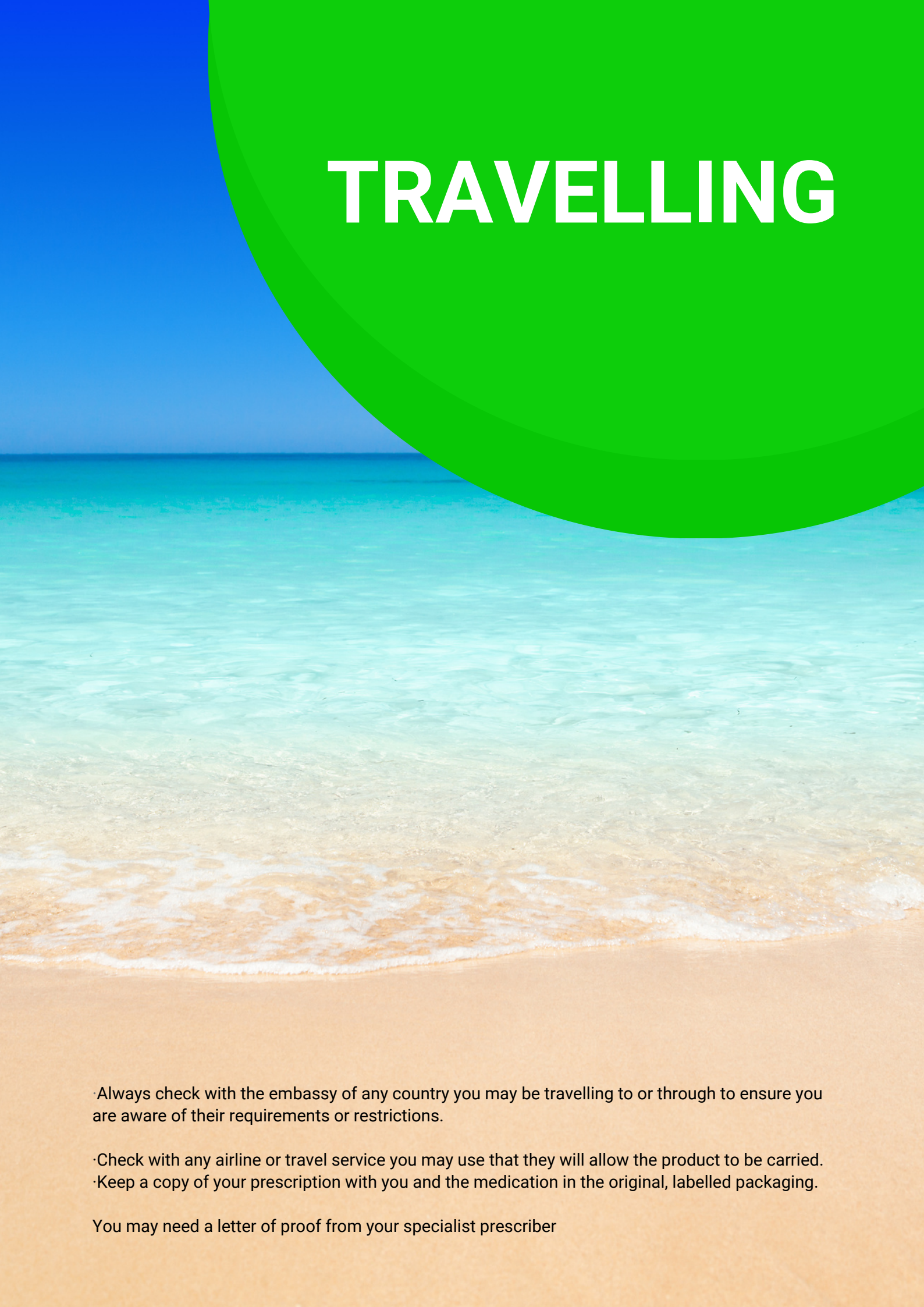


If you are not impaired then you can drive with a legal prescription of cannabis. Keep the original packaging and adhere to the prescription instructions. There is a legal defence to potential prosecution of driving over the THC limit (as long as you are not impaired). Do not operate machinery if you experience any effects which impair judgement or affect performance.

Alcohol

These medications may interact with alcohol, affecting reaction times and concentration. Please avoid alcohol when using these products, especially at the start of treatment and during dose changes.





TRAVELLING

· Always check with the embassy of any country you may be travelling to or through to ensure you are aware of their requirements or restrictions.

· Check with any airline or travel service you may use that they will allow the product to be carried.
· Keep a copy of your prescription with you and the medication in the original, labelled packaging.

You may need a letter of proof from your specialist prescriber

Storage

- Please store as per the label instructions on your specific product and keep in the original packaging.
- Keep out of the reach of children or animals.
- Do not use after the expiry date.
- Do not use if the product has obvious signs of deterioration.
- Take any unused product to your local pharmacy for disposal or return to your CBMP dispenser. Do NOT put in household waste or down the sink/toilet.



Using Dried Flower

Always use a good quality vaporiser device, ideally a medical vaporiser
Keep packets sealed when not in use to eliminate contact with air as much as possible.

Because medical cannabis is a natural botanical product, it can host microscopic organisms such as bacteria, yeast, and mould. For patients, especially those with compromised immune systems, inhaling these microbes can pose a serious health risk, such as respiratory infections.

Irradiation: is a standard sterilization process used globally in the food and pharmaceutical industries. The flower is exposed to a controlled dose of ionizing radiation (such as Gamma rays or E-beam), which neutralizes harmful pathogens by damaging their DNA so they cannot reproduce.

Is it radioactive? No. The process is similar to an X-ray; it passes through the flower to clean it and leaves no residual radiation behind. Does it change the medicine? Clinical studies show that irradiation does not significantly alter the levels of major cannabinoids like THC and CBD. While it can cause a slight reduction in some delicate terpenes (the compounds responsible for aroma), the overall therapeutic profile remains intact.

Why Regulators Require GMP.

In the medical world, consistency is everything. Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) is a rigorous international quality standard that ensures every batch of medicine is produced to the same high specification. Regulators require GMP certification to guarantee:

Purity: Strict protocols prevent cross-contamination from heavy metals, pesticides, or foreign materials.

Consistency: Patients can trust that a 20% THC flower today will have the same potency in three months.

Traceability: Every step, from the drying room to the final packaging, is documented so that any issue can be instantly traced and resolved.



Using Dried Flower cont...



Administration, efficiency and bioavailability.

Bioavailability: refers to the percentage of a substance that actually enters your bloodstream to produce an effect. When it comes to cannabis flower, how you consume it significantly changes how much "medicine" your body actually receives.

Vapourisation vs. Smoking : While smoking is a common traditional method, it is inefficient. The high heat of a flame (combustion) reaches temperatures over 450°C, which actually destroys up to 50% of the cannabinoids before you even inhale them. Vapourising heats the flower to a precise temperature (usually between 160°C and 210°C). This "vapourises" the cannabinoids and terpenes into a vapour without burning the plant material. Higher Efficiency: Vapourisation offers a bioavailability of approximately 30–50%, compared to just 10–25% for smoking. Rapid Onset: Because the vapor is absorbed directly through the lungs, effects are felt within minutes, allowing for easy "dose titration" (finding the exact amount you need). Healthier Delivery: By avoiding combustion, you eliminate the intake of toxic byproducts like tar and carbon monoxide, making it the medically preferred method for inhaling flower.

Comparison of Cannabis Efficacy Onset Time: Vaporising Flower vs. Edibles & Oils

Method	Onset Time
 Vaporising Flower	1 – 5 Minutes 
 Edibles & Oils	30 – 60 Minutes 

Vaporised cannabis flower: Bioavailability 30–40%. Cannabis oils & tinctures: Bioavailability 10–20%.

Comparison of Cannabis Efficacy Duration: Vaporising Flower vs. Edibles & Oils

Method	Duration of Efficacy
 Vaporising Flower	2 – 4 Hours 
 Edibles & Oils	6 – 8+ Hours 

Vaporised cannabis flower: Bioavailability 30–40%. Cannabis oils & tinctures: Bioavailability 10–20%.

Using Oils

- Using the syringe provided, withdraw the correct amount **SLOWLY**.
- Ensure there are no air bubbles within the syringe.
- Repeat the process if necessary to make up the dose.
- Administer the oil under the tongue (sublingually) slowly – rapid delivery may cause choking.
- Ideally, hold the oil under the tongue for 1-2 minutes if possible.
- Do not put the syringe into boiling water or a microwave.

