

# Sources

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## CANNA-PATIENT EXPERIENCE

# Cannabinoids and Autoimmune Diseases



This information is not intended as medical advice and none of these statements have been evaluated by the FDA.

Questions?

## Autoimmune Diseases and Cannabis: Tips

- Talk to your doctor about incorporating cannabis into your therapy. **There is no specific dose and no specific strain for any given autoimmune disease.**
- Decide whether you want to use cannabis for disease modification (requires consistent access to potentially high dosing) and/or for symptom modification.
- Start experimenting with different cannabinoid ratios to find what works for you. **Know THC is just as therapeutic as CBD, and THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A CURE.**
- **Keep a journal.** You will not remember which varieties worked for which symptoms after a while, and there are **thousands** of strain varieties. **For example, some people experience anxiety and jittery uneasiness when they use “sativa” strains.** Keeping a journal will help you figure out what works best for you!
- Learn about your endocannabinoid system and how it works. Don't expect doctors to understand how cannabis works in the body.
- Connect with other autoimmune disease patients who are using cannabis to augment their therapy. Chances are someone with your condition is already on this journey too!

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## Getting Started!

**Inhaled Forms (vaporized)** —use these for acute symptoms like an immediate release analgesic or anti-nausea medication. For seasoned concentrate users, inhaled forms like dabbing can be helpful when immediate calming of spasms is needed, such as in the case of achalasia patients. Always treat inhaled forms of cannabis as therapy and weigh the risk/reward. Many autoimmune diseases involve lung damage, and all smoke has damaging components.

**Ingested Forms (edibles, tinctures, all oral forms)**—use these in a manner similar to extended release pharmaceuticals. Oral THC converts slightly differently than then inhaled THC and is stronger and lasts longer. These effects can last up to 8 hours in some, and be quite unpleasant if too much is taken. **Start very slow, with no more than 2mg to 5mg per dose. Wait at least 5 hours in between doses before taking more. Increase your dose in the same 2mg to 5mg increments.**

**Topicals**—For joint and muscle related pains, try looking for a cannabis rub that also contains herbs like cloves, lavender, and mint. There is an endless combination of cannabis and herb topicals to try, and for more information on how to get started with that, see CPRC's *Beginner Cannabinoids and Terpenes* class.

The terms “indica” and “sativa” are used in therapeutic cannabis centers to describe specific effects. Indica describes a “pain relieving, sedative” effect, while sativa usually refers to uplifting and energetic effects.



## Ways to Incorporate Cannabis in Therapy!

### Disease Management

**Consistent dosing is needed, so look for reliable and affordable access.**

**In studies by GW Pharmaceuticals, Sativex (1:1THC:CBD) has shown to help MS symptoms.**

**In studies, cannabis has shown promise on TNF- $\alpha$ , JAK, IL, and ERK processes.**

### Symptom Management

Skin issues

Pain

Neuropathy

Insomnia

Spasms

Depression/Anxiety

Blood Pressure

Nausea