CANNABIS OILS EXPLAINED

Ingestible cannabis oils are a great, smoke-free alternative for medical cannabis users. Because it may be a new format to some, there are often a number of questions surrounding what cannabis oils are and how they are used.

What is Cannabis Oil and Where Does it Come From?

Cannabinoids (THC and CBD) and terpenes naturally exist as oily syrupy substances, and for this reason it is not uncommon for one's hands to become sticky when touching fresh cannabis flower. The sticky sensation one feels has to do with the fact that cannabis flowers and leaves are covered with tiny crystal-like structures called trichomes, and it is within these structures that cannabinoid and terpene oils are contained [1].

Cannabinoid and terpene oils cover the flower and leaves of the cannabis plant.

Like other oils you encounter at the supermarket (i.e. olive oil, corn oil, peanut oil), cannabis oil is made by extracting cannabinoids and terpenes from a raw plant material (i.e. cannabis flowers). The way in which cannabis oils are extracted from the cannabis plant and refined, will dictate the final chemical make-up of a cannabis oil product.

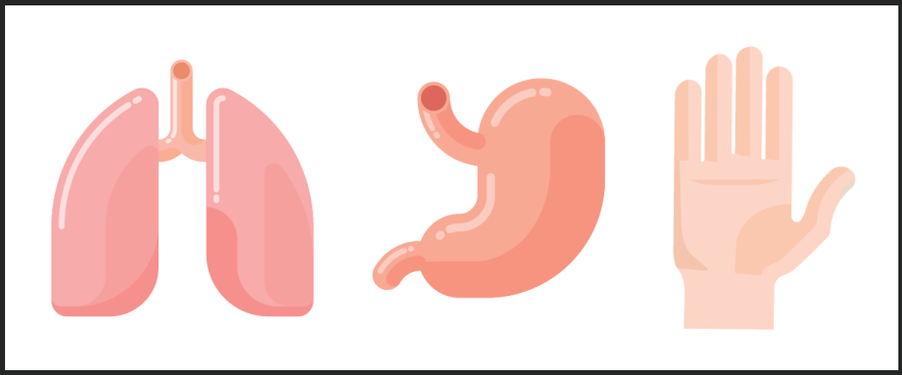
What is The Difference Between Ingestible and Non-Ingestible Cannabis Oils?

Once the cannabis oil has been extracted from cannabis flower, it can be incorporated into different product formats including cannabis oil with syringe, softgels, oral spray, vape concentrates, topicals or transdermal patches (a topically applied product that is able to enter the bloodstream).

The way in which the oil has been specifically formulated will impact the way in which it should be used. For instance, ingestible oil products such as our oil bottle with syringe contain Medium Chain Triglyceride (MCT) oil and should NEVER be consumed via inhalation with a vaping device. When heated at levels used by vaping devices, carrier oils like MCT will begin to burn and subsequently breakdown to form toxic byproducts that may have adverse effects on the lungs.

Similarly, vape concentrates which have been formulated for inhalation through a vaping device, should never be ingested as these products contain highly concentrated amounts of cannabinoids and terpenes.

Cannabis oil can be used to make a variety of product formats.



<table>
<tr><th>INTENDED FOR INHALATION</th><th>INTENDED FOR INGESTION</th><th>EXTERNAL USE</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Vape Concentrates</td><td>Oil with Syringe</td><td rowspan="2">Topicals</td></tr>
<tr><td>Softgel</td></tr>
<tr><td>Oral Spray</td><td>Oral Spray</td></tr>
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How Are Ingestible Cannabis Oils Made?

Ingestible cannabis oils are a made using a supercritical carbon dioxide (CO2) extraction process which has been developed to pull out (extract) cannabinoids (THC and CBD) from dried cannabis flower.

Step 1: We activate the cannabis by heating it.

Step 2: The activated cannabis (raw material) is extracted using supercritical CO2.
Our CO2 extraction process is similar to cooking with a pressure cooker, whereby we cook the cannabis flowers in the presence of CO2 under high pressure and heat. Under these conditions CO2 exists as both a liquid and gas and is able to permeate the cannabis materials and extract the desired cannabinoids.

Step 3: The CO2 is evaporated leaving a concentrated cannabis extract
After the extraction process is complete, we filter out any unwanted plant matter that was extracted alongside the cannabinoids.

Step 4: The concentrated extract is diluted into Medium Chain Triglyceride Oil (MCT).
Because the final mixture is highly concentrated, we dilute it into MCT oil in order to reach a specific potency for THC and CBD. We use MCT oil to make our ingestible oils because it has a long-shelf life (does not go bad quickly) and it is non-allergenic, as opposed to coconut oil, which is listed as an FDA allergen.

DID YOU KNOW? Our medium chain triglycerides (MCT) oil is not derived from coconut, but from palm kernel oil. The supplier is 100% vertically integrated and is fully RSPO Certified for Sustainability under globally recognized certificates. These guidelines are in place to ensure that the source of palm oil is from a sustainable source and does not cause harm to the environment.

Find out more about the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) Certification program here.

More About Ingestible Oil Chemistry

In addition to THC and CBD, our ingestible cannabis oils may contain small amounts of other cannabinoids (i.e. THCA, CBDA, CBG, CBN) and trace amounts of terpenes (i.e. caryophyllene, humulene)[2]. Since ingestible cannabis oils have undergone more refinement than dried flower, they are classified as broad spectrum as they contain some, but not all, of cannabis' original chemical make-up*.

* There is currently no standardized definition or criteria within the cannabis industry for categorizing products as full spectrum or broad spectrum. As a result, similar CO2 extracted oils sold in Canada have been called full spectrum by other companies.

An Overview of Ingestible Cannabis Oils Formats

Once the cannabis oil has been diluted into MCT oil, it is packaged into three distinct formats to suit your individual needs.

gives patients full control over the dosage of their medication. This means that it's a good option for those who dose at low or high amounts, or those who are slowly and gradually increasing their dosage until a level that maximizes therapeutic effects and minimizes potential unwanted side effects is found. The syringe also makes it convenient to apply the oil under the tongue.

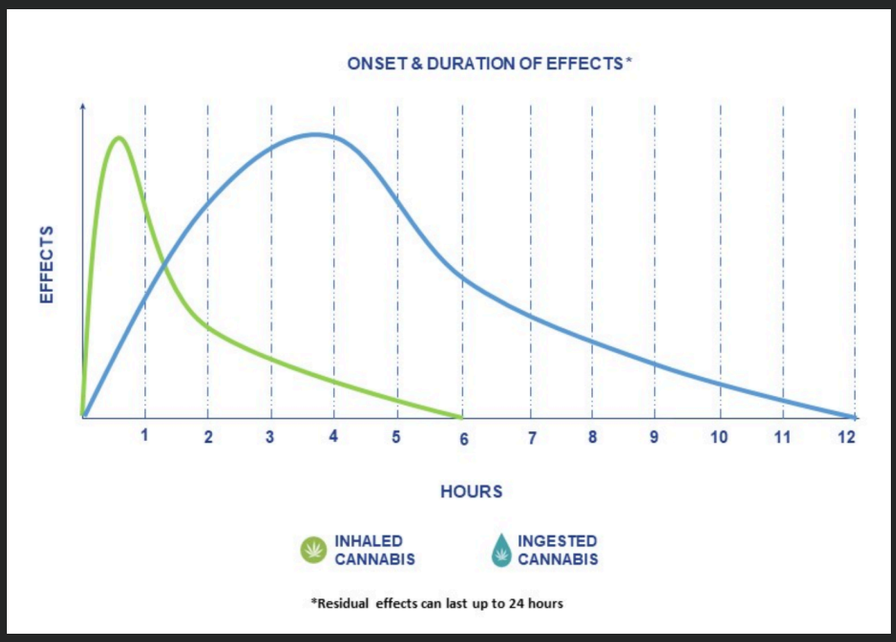
allow for easy transportation of patients' medication and allows for convenient and discreet use while on-the-go. They allow patients to take their medication in low, regular doses, a practice referred to as "micro-dosing".

provide a consistent, pre-measured amount of oil for those who know their effective dose. They allow for easier and more discreet transportation as well as consumption of cannabis oil. Finally, because the oil is sealed within the gel capsule, the softgels are flavourless and odourless.

How To Consume Ingestible Oils

Ingestible cannabis oils can be administered by placing them on or under your tongue (sublingual), swallowing directly, or by adding it to food once it has been prepared. Regardless of which way you choose, it will take more time to feel full effects from ingestible oils in comparison to products that are inhaled such as dried flower or vape concentrates.

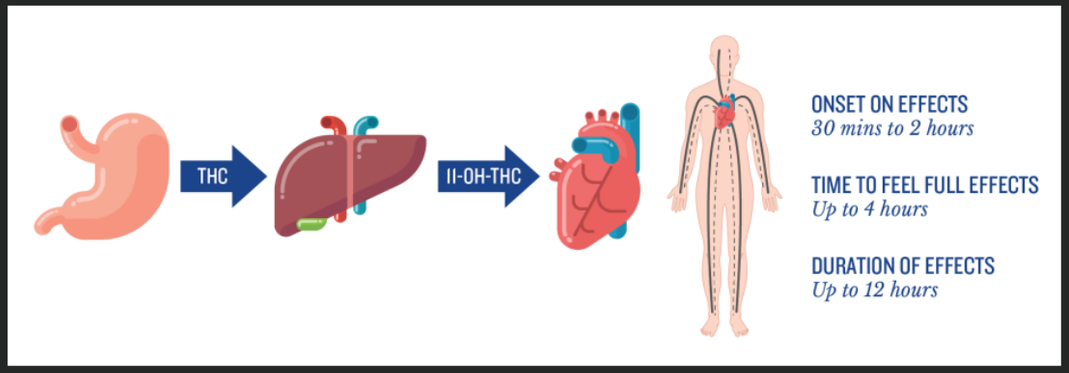
For this reason, ingestible cannabis oil formats may be better for managing chronic symptoms (develop over time and are persistent), such as chronic pain and arthritis because of their longer duration of effect[3].



DID YOU KNOW? You can improve absorption of ingested cannabis oils by consuming on a full stomach (i.e. high fat meal)[4,5].

Onset and Duration of Effects

According to Health Canada, effects from ingested cannabis oils will commence within 30 minutes to two hours after ingestion and may last up to 12 hours, with some residual effects lasting longer6. The time it takes to feel effects from ingestible cannabis oils is slower because swallowed cannabis oil needs to be absorbed through the digestive tract. Once absorbed, THC and other cannabinoids are metabolized by the liver, eventually entering the bloodstream[6].



Ingesting cannabis will allow for THC to be converted into a more potent form (11-OH-THC) which helps prolong effects[5].

How Long Should I Wait Before Taking Another Dose in the Same Day?

It can take as much as four hours to feel full effects from cannabis oils, for this reason one should wait at least four to six hours before taking another dose[6].

References

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