



Decision Support Tool



Sharing decisions about your treatment with Lumir Clinic

This document is called a decision aid or decision support tool. It is designed to help you and the doctor agree which types of cannabis medicine may be right for you and to prompt any questions you may like to ask during your consultation. (**Subject to medical assessment and agreement, a trial with cannabis based medicines is appropriate to meet clinical need/s*).

It is suitable for people who have registered with the clinic and have scheduled an appointment with one of our General Medical Council registered specialist doctors. Some people find it useful to complete a decision aid and have it to hand during an appointment.

A reminder of some important points about cannabis medicines

Cannabis medicines are "unlicensed special medicines." This means the medicine you may be prescribed, has not been through the clinical testing and trials a licensed medicine has. Due a lack of clinical trials, there is limited data available about cannabis-based medicines. Not all health professionals believe cannabis medicines are helpful, although cannabis has been used as a medicine since ancient times and observational studies have shown many people report improved symptom management and quality of life when using cannabis-based medicines.





Cannabis medicines are prescribed on a named patient basis, they are ordered and dispensed especially for you. Because of this, accessing your medicines can take longer than accessing the medicines prescribed by your GP and collected from a high street pharmacy.

Each clinic is responsible for deciding which cannabis medicines they prescribe to patients, just because a medicine is available in the UK it does not mean our doctors will/ can prescribe it to you. Some medicines are only available through certain clinics or certain pharmacies, therefore not accessible to all patients. Lumir Clinic aims to provide a wide range of medicines across price points and type, subject to UK supply.

Cannabis medicines must go through a regulatory approval process before they are available to patients. This involves the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency and the Home Office. The clinic has no control over how long that takes. If a cannabis medicine prescribed to you is not in stock, the doctor may recommend a different cannabis-based medicine rather than have a gap without treatment.

All medicines have a risk of side effects. Experiencing a side effect does not mean there is something wrong with the medicine. If you experience side effects that are difficult to manage or do not go away within 7-10 days, please contact the clinic. You may need to be reviewed by a nurse or prescriber. This is the same for any medicine prescribed for you and not specific to cannabis-based medicines.

Cannabis medicines are intended to manage the symptoms of your condition. These medicines will not “cure” a health issue. If a cannabis medicine is reducing or removing your symptoms and daily activity becomes more manageable, health professionals refer to an improvement to your quality of life. If you stop taking the cannabis medicine, your symptoms may return.

Rather than use cannabis-based medications in isolation, many people report greater benefits, when using cannabis-based medicines alongside other therapies or inputs such as talking therapies, physiotherapy, exercise, or mindfulness. Engaging in small amounts of activity can be helpful. Consistency matters more than intensity when beginning any wellness plan and every little counts.

Do not stop taking any medicines prescribed by other doctors without speaking to the clinic and your regular doctor. It is important you tell Lumir Clinic about any changes to your health or medication which has been prescribed for you elsewhere.

You will need follow up appointments when you access treatment through Lumir Clinic, these are generally 4 weeks parts for the first two appointments, unless there is a clinical reason for the doctor to see you sooner. Beyond this, you will need to be seen every 3 months or if you wanted to change your cannabis medications outside of any agreement with our doctors. You will be asked periodically to complete questionnaires about your condition. The frequency of questionnaires will be determined by clinical staff. This enables you and the prescribers to monitor your progress and understand which cannabis medicines are working for you. We will periodically ask for updated health information to ensure cannabis medicines are still right for you.





Once you have settled on cannabis medicines, and have moved to less frequent follow ups, you can request repeat prescriptions for the months in between consultations. Appointments and repeat prescriptions can be booked through your patient app or online account. Please remember, the costs of your cannabis medicines are paid to the pharmacy and are separate to the fees payable to the clinic for your consultations.

Which type of medication is right for you?

To find the right treatment plan for you, it is important to think about your main reason for using cannabis medicines.

Cannabis medicines are used with the aim of removing or reducing your symptoms or the negative effects your condition has on you day to day. Doctors refer to this as symptom control or symptom management.

Doctors generally refer to two types of symptom control. These are background symptoms and breakthrough symptoms or symptoms requiring rescue. There are some examples below of managing symptoms. It is useful to think your symptoms and the impact on day-to-day life in advance of your appointment; this may support discussion with the doctor and help the doctor to make recommendations. Please list any questions you have for the doctor and have to hand during your appointment.

| Background symptom control examples | Breakthrough / Rescue symptoms control examples |
|--|---|
| <p>Taking medication every 4 hours to reduce back pain.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Taking a tablet every day to help with feeling low or depressed.</p> | <p>Taking additional medication as and when, to help with a sudden burst of pain, even though you have taken regular pain killers.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Taking medication to halt or reduce a sudden feeling of panic or a panic attack.</p> |

The effects of your condition may vary according to the time of day. Some people find they want help to be more active during the day, others more relaxed in the evening / night time. Depending on your condition you may need help with both. Cannabis medicines are produced from different strains of cannabis and some people report different strains are more helpful at a particular time of day. It is useful to think about this in advance of your appointment and list any questions you have.





The table below shows some examples of treatment aims. Thinking about your treatment aims helps the doctor to understand your needs and make recommendations.

If you have used cannabis medicinally in the past, you may have an idea of what works for you. It is helpful to share this with the doctor during your appointment and think about any adverse effects as well as the benefits. The goal is to find a treatment plan which maximises the benefit without side effect.

| Help in the day example | Help in the evening / nighttime examples |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have less pain doing day-to-day activities • Be more active • To increase enjoyment in day-to-day activities • To feel less stressed • To feel more positive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drop off to sleep sooner • To feel more relaxed before bedtime • To wake up feeling refreshed from sleep |

Some patients find cannabis-based medicines eliminate their symptoms entirely, others see a partial improvement, however they continue with cannabis medicines because it is still an improvement in quality of life, which is greater than has been achieved without. The discussion you have during your follow up appointments, combined with any questionnaires we ask you complete, will help both you and the doctor to discuss if the cannabis-based medicine has been helpful.

The table on the following page provides information about the several types of cannabis medicines. The type of cannabis medicine you agree with the doctor will be influenced by your symptoms, how they impact on you day to day, your treatment aims, cost, how/ when your symptoms interfere with your quality of life and your preferred route of medicines administration.





Ways to take your cannabis medicines – route of medicines self-administration

There are several different forms of cannabis medicine. Below is a list of what may be available, how each medicine is taken, how fast they are likely to work and how long they are likely to feel effective, alongside some general considerations.

Please remember effect can vary from person to person.

It is useful to think about your circumstances and consider the best match for your needs, this will help your doctor work out a plan with you.

Please make a note of questions you have to discuss with your prescriber.

| Medication form | How to use | How long does it take to work | How long does the effect last | Considerations |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| ORAL MEDICINES | | | | |
| Oils / extracts | Drop under tongue hold and swallow | 30 minutes to 2 hours | 4-12 hours | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes longer to start working but has longer lasting effect • To maintain the benefit, should be taken at regular intervals, even if you think you do not need it • Does not need extra equipment to use • No cannabis vapour smell • Good for background symptom control • The oil that carries the active ingredient does not suit everybody and may cause some tummy irritation • Carrier oils needs to be checked against allergies • Takes time to build up in system • Earthy taste • More discreet than vaping • If background control is needed, may work out more economical than other options |





| Medication form | How to use | How long does it take to work | How long does the effect last | Considerations |
|------------------|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| Pastilles | To be chewed / slowly dissolved like a lozenger & swallowed | 45 minutes to one hour | 4-6 hours | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes longer to start working but has longer lasting effect • To maintain the benefit, should be taken at regular intervals, even if you think you do not need it • Does not need extra equipment to use • No cannabis vapour smell • Good for background symptom control • The oil that carries the active ingredient does not suit everybody and may cause some tummy irritation • Carrier oils needs to be checked against allergies • Takes time to build up in system • Earthy taste • More discreet than vaping • If background control is needed, may work out more economical than other options |
| Capsules | Swallow | Up to 2 hours | 4-6 hours | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes longer to start working • Longer lasting effect • To maintain the benefit, needs to be taken at regular intervals, even if you think you do not need it • Does not need extra equipment to use • No cannabis vapour smell • Good for background symptom control • The oil that carries the active ingredient does not suit everybody and can caused some tummy irritation • Carrier oils needs to be checked against allergies • Takes time to build up in system. • Less earthy taste than oil • Can be more expensive than other options taken by mouth but provides longer term effect with regular use • Discreet |





| Medication form | How to use | How long does it take to work | How long does the effect last | Considerations |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| INHALED MEDICINES | | | | |
| Oil cartridge | Inhale vapour | 0-2 minutes | 1-2 hours | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faster onset – effect short lived • Needs a battery (maybe extra cost) • Less smell from cannabis vapour than flos/ flower • Useful for breakthrough symptoms • Easy to assemble. No measuring or weighing • Small and portable device. More discreet than a dry herbal vapouriser • May not be suitable for those with some respiratory conditions • Least economical way to manage background symptoms • Vape technique may need practice • Can cause some short / long term throat / chest irritation |
| Dried cannabis flos (flower) | Inhale vapour | 0-2 minutes | 1-2 hours | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fast onset – effect shorter lived • Must be used with a dry herbal vape device. The device is an additional cost • Medicine needs to be weighed and ground (prepared for use) • Equipment needs to be maintained / cleaned regularly • Vapour gives off a more recognisable cannabis smell • Flos can be used in pre-dose pods for convenience • Some vape devices look like nicotine replacement devices so less obvious. • May not be suitable for patients with some respiratory conditions. • Widest range of treatment options • Effective breakthrough /rescue symptoms • Vape technique may take practice • Can cause some short / long term throat / chest irritation |





Known side effects – side effects versus reported benefit

Known side effects are based on reports from people who have used cannabis medicinally. You may not experience any unwanted effects, however if you do the clinic can help you to manage this.

A side effect does not mean the cannabis medicine is not working. Some side effects may improve over time. A side effect does not mean there is something wrong with the cannabis medicine.

Your initial dose and treatment plan is designed to help you adjust to using your cannabis medicine, if you do not follow the plan and overuse your medicine, there is a chance you may go beyond the amount of cannabis-based medicine you need to control a symptom. Overuse may trigger unpleasant effects but may not increase any benefit. This can occur with people new to cannabis medicines, as well as people who have self-medicated with non-prescribed cannabis.

The severity of any side effect may depend on the content/strength of your medicine and the dose you are taking may need adjustment by the doctor. This is why the clinic arranges follow-up appointments during the early weeks of treatment. If there is a clinical need for close monitoring and you need to be seen more frequently, the doctor will advise. We publish a treatment pathway for general information, however there may be circumstances which dictate you need to be seen more frequently.

Side effects can be grouped in to very common, common and uncommon. As with all medicines, people using cannabis-based medicines must consider if the benefits of taking cannabis medicines, outweighs any risk, including the risk of side effects. Some people report their quality of life is better using cannabis medicines even with some side effects; there will be others who find side effects more troublesome and do not use cannabis-based medicines long term. It can take several weeks and in some cases a few months to understand if cannabis medicines are right for you.

The table on the following page shows the known side effects and reported frequency.





| VERY COMMON More than 1 in 10 people | COMMON Less than 1 in 10 people | UNCOMMON Less than 1 in 100 people |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Feeling tired</p> <p>Some dizziness</p> | <p>Nausea / Vomiting</p> <p>Disorientation / falls</p> <p>Changes to mood</p> <p>Low / increased appetite</p> <p>Diarrhoea / constipation</p> <p>Feeling drowsy / vertigo</p> <p>Anxiety</p> <p>Memory disturbance</p> <p>Difficulty concentrating</p> <p>Dry mouth / dry eyes / Blurred vision</p> | <p>Seeing or hearing things that are not there (hallucinations)</p> <p>Believing ideas that are not true</p> <p>Feeling that other people are against you</p> <p>Thoughts of harming yourself</p> <p>Fainting or feeling faint</p> <p>Changes in pulse rate, heart rate or blood pressure</p> <p>Tummy pain</p> |





General considerations for the use of cannabis-based medicines

Below is a table of points to consider before moving on to think about your unique clinical needs. It may prompt further questions for the Lumir Clinic team or the doctor during your consultation. We suggest writing them down, and keeping them to hand.

| Cannabis-based medications: | | |
|--|---|--|
| Are legal when taken as prescribed supply will not exceed a 30-days at a time. | Must be securely stored in their original container, away from direct heat/ light sources and away from children and pets. | Must be delivered to a secure location e.g. no shared mailboxes. It is illegal to share cannabis-based medicines with other people. |
| Are only prescribed by Lumir Clinic to patients who are registered with a GP and who have given consent to share information with their GP (or other service as clinically relevant). | Are only prescribed to people who engage with treatment and arrange follow-up as recommended by the doctor. | Are generally long-term medications and when they are discontinued, symptoms may return. As with all medicines there are known side effects. |
| <p>Are recommended after considering patient wishes and preferences and in accordance with clinical needs. There is no 100% guarantee a prescription will be issued to you. There may health issues you raise during your appointment which the doctor was not or could not be aware in advance of your appointment.</p> <p>Some people conclude with the doctor the expectation of treatment was not realistic and you decide not to proceed.</p> <p>It is important you have not withheld information from the clinic.</p> | <p>May take longer to access than other medications.</p> <p>Depending on your prescription the medicine must be ordered on a named patient basis, supplied to pharmacy, dispensed, and delivered to you.</p> <p>This is different from the licensed medicines held in stock by a high street pharmacy which are quickly accessible.</p> | <p>Are prescribed by Lumir Clinic on a private basis.</p> <p>There are two costs associated with this.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The cost of the medicines 2. The fees paid to the clinic for the health/wellbeing service provided <p>These costs do not cover the devices required to self-administer the medication such as vape devices.</p> |

The next page relates to your clinical needs and may be useful to have to hand during your initial assessment.

We recommend saving this tool and using it to review your needs, any time your health or circumstances change.





Individual considerations and clinical needs

If your condition or health need has changed since you registered with Lumir Clinic, please contact the clinic to discuss. An important part of delivering a safe clinical service is ensuring the doctor has considered your past medical history, allergies, long term health needs as well as any new health problems.

If you are unsure if an issue is relevant, please discuss it with the clinic. The team is available to answer any questions in advance of your appointment.

The following questions are designed to help you and the doctor understand your expectations of cannabis medicines and agree a plan that best suits your needs.

Thinking about your condition

I have constant symptoms that I cannot reduce or eliminate.

My symptoms are generally managed, but I have some episodes where my symptoms are extreme and distressing.

My symptoms vary from day to day there is no real pattern.

Thinking about your day-to-day activities

My symptoms trouble me the most during the day.

My symptoms trouble me most during the evening / at night.

My symptoms vary from day to day there is no real pattern.

Thinking about how you prefer to take medicines, where you take medicines and any help you may need

I would prefer not to inhale medications / a health condition means I should not inhale vapour.

I struggle to swallow tablets or liquid medicines / a health condition prevents me from taking tablets or liquid medicines.

I prefer a medicine that does not require preparation to use such as weighing and grinding.

I have issues with dexterity and might struggle to clean or prepare medication / devices.

I would prefer medicines that can be taken discreetly.

I would like to avoid as far as possible any cannabis odour.

I can administer my own medicines.

I have help from relatives / informal carers to take my medicines.

I have formal carers, support workers or nurses to administer my medicines.



Thinking about your treatment aims and expectations

I would like to reduce my symptoms enough to enjoy life and take more interest in things.

I want to eliminate all of my symptoms.

I think a minor side effect would be more manageable than my current symptoms.

My priority is improving the symptoms I experience during the day.

My priority is improving the symptoms I experience during the night / evening.

I would like to improve things during the day and night.

My priority is to have a longer acting medicine for all better round symptom control.

My priority is to have something fast acting as a rescue medicine / to manage breakthrough symptom.

I would like to have a long acting as well as a fast-acting medicine to hand as my symptoms vary.

I am willing to try different approaches to find the best fit / plan for me, if it helps long term.

I understand I may have to compromise within treatment plans, subject to the availability and cost of medicines.

Please contact the clinic if you have any questions or would like some help to prepare for your appointment.

We suggest making a note of questions you have for the doctor as you think of them, to ensure you get the best from your consultation.

If you would like guidance on cannabis-based medicines in relation to travel, driving or employment please contact the clinic.

Decision Support Tool – first published 28th April 2025

To be reviewed annually or change when guidance dictates – whichever date is soonest

Text reviewed with Flesch reading ease scale, SMOG index & Gunning fog index

Author: Emma Donoghue RN, BSc (Hons), Cert PPH, Cert Man Care





Phone 0330 828 5998
lumirclinic.co.uk