DEAR MEDICAL PRACTITIONER - the purpose of this package is to familiarize you with our organization's mandate, principles, and some basic scientific and cultural information surrounding the use of cannabis as medicine. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns about the contents of this package, please contact us at the phone number listed at the top of this page.

THE VICTORIA CANNABIS BUYERS' CLUB (VCBC) is a membership-owned, community based nonprofit society that operates one of Canada’s oldest and best-established medical cannabis dispensaries. Membership at the Victoria Cannabis Buyers’ Club requires a physician’s diagnosis of a permanent physical disease or disability. All psychiatric disorders, including ADHD and Depression, as well as some physical conditions, require a doctor’s specific recommendation. Those with an Authorization to Possess (ATP) under Health Canada's Marijuana Medical Access Regulations (MMAR) program are welcome, and we are happy to assist anyone with the application to this program.

However, the VCBC acknowledges that, although cannabis has been used by people throughout human history, and its effects have been documented empirically since the very birth of writing, many doctors are hesitant to endorse its therapeutic use due to a lack of modern scientific studies, as well as certain pressures to conform to recommendations laid out by the Canadian Medical Association. For these reasons, we accept any patient who can prove, through proper medical documentation, that they possess a permanent physical condition for which cannabis has been recommended in the MMAR. Also, we are happy to provide temporary memberships for non-permanent conditions on the recommendation of a physician.

The club’s primary mandate is to provide its membership with safe access to medicinal cannabis and cannabis related products. To best meet our members’ individual needs, we offer an expansive range of products at reasonable prices, including dried cannabis, sieved hashes, and edible and topical products. We ensure the highest quality in the sourcing and production of all our products.
Also, VCBC is proud to offer a range of community services that compliment its dispensary service. Our Vapour Lounge is a safe and comfortable environment for our members to consume their medicine while connecting with a diverse group of people who are united in their healing. Our Vapour Lounge is wheelchair accessible and has a hospital grade HEPA filtration system.

There is extensive cultural and archeological evidence that cannabis has historically been used as medicine by numerous societies, many of which continue this practice today. Our knowledge of how far back into history the medicinal uses of cannabis can be found is limited only by the mutability of the written word. Some of the earliest records of cannabis as medicine come to us from Egypt, with the oldest document being the 3rd fragment of the Ramesseum Medical Papyri, c. 1800 BCE, wherein a cannabis suppository is recommended for relief from hemorrhoid symptoms (Pain).

3rd century CE Chinese physician Hua Tuo devised the first known surgical anesthetic from a mixture of strong wine and cannabis (de Crespigny). It is also listed as one of the 50 fundamental herbs of Chinese medicine (Smith), being used by itself and in combination with other herbs in countless medicinal formulas.

In ancient India, cannabis was used to treat ailments such as insomnia and provide pain relief (Touw), and in Greece it was applied to cure ailments such as nosebleeds and tapeworms (Butrica), and in Medieval Islam it was used as a diuretic, antiemetic, antiepileptic.

In fact, in the West, cannabis was the primary pain-reliever prescribed by doctors until it was replaced by Asprin in 1897 (history of), and until the drug war began around 1937 there were at least 2000 different cannabis based medicines available (antique).

This means that the past 80 or so years have been the only time in the history of the planet that cannabis hasn’t formed a key ingredient in the mainstream healing practices of human communities, a disparity that we at the VCBC are working hard to rectify.

Serious, unprejudiced medical inquiry into the pharmacology of medicinal cannabis has only been happening since the advent of the medical marijuana movement in the United States has made funding available for such studies. These studies are beginning to show the many ways in which different cannabinoids interact with the human endocannabinoid system to produce various bio-regulatory effects. Of the over 85 different cannabinoids produced by the over 1500 known strains of cannabis, the following have received the most scrutiny thus far:

**Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC)** is a powerful analgesic (Elphic), appetite stimulant, antiemetic (Hoaken), is a mild antioxidant, and has been shown to have certain neuroprotective qualities (Pertwee). It may also have potential as a treatment for neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimers and ALS (Brown).
Cannabidiol (CBD), characteristic of indica strains, has been shown to inhibit the activity of the limbic system, and as such to reduce the anxiety many users experience from THC (de Souza). Related to this are antipsychotic effects that have proven useful in treating schizophrenia (Leweke), and has potential as a treatment for both Parkinson’s disease (Snider), and dystonia (Consroe), and has been shown to prevent neurodegeneration resulting from binge drinking (Hamelink).

Cannabinol (CBN), has pharmacological properties similar to THC, but is less potent (Mahadevan).

β-Caryophyllene is not psychoactive, and has been shown to be an excellent anti-inflammatory (Gertsch).

Cannabigerol (CBG) has been shown to reduce intraocular pressure, and is therefore useful as a treatment for glaucoma.

Please understand that, due to the unfortunate illegal nature of the medical cannabis industry in Canada today, dispensaries tend not to be staffed by qualified medical practitioners or doctors of science. Nor are we trying to style ourselves as such. We are simply a community-minded grass-roots organization that is filling a gap that would otherwise be filled by organized criminals and street dealers. What knowledge we have comes from years of practice in a profession that has only just begun to take shape.

Quality control is of the utmost importance in dispensing cannabis as medicine responsibly. At the VCBC we deal with a well established set of dedicated suppliers whose product has been continuously and thoroughly vetted throughout our dealings with them. We inspect every batch of medicine thoroughly for mold and other contaminants, and are affiliated with a cannabis testing laboratory that uses gas chromatography to test for cannabinoid content as well as chemical contaminants from fertilizer and soil. Also, if any member ever feels that their purchase has been unsatisfactory, either due to a missed issue with the product or a simple lack of effectiveness for their particular condition, we are glad to exchange the unsatisfactory medicine for an equal amount of another variety. This mitigates many issues surrounding the variability of the chemical compositions of different cannabis phenotypes, as well as any oversights in quality control.

Community is the driving principle behind our ethos. While our daily operation centres around the provision of safe medicine and a safe space in which to consume it, we do much more than these facilitations. All of our staff are personable, caring individuals who take the time and interest to develop personal relationships with our members, who are from diverse classes and backgrounds. We believe that society and community are integral in the healing process, and so we encourage our members to use the club as a social space, which they do. We also organize a number of social events for our members throughout the year.


