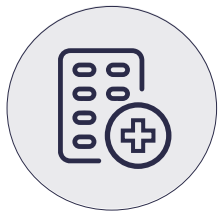


What's the difference between Medicinal Cannabis and CBD products?

How to get it right in the media



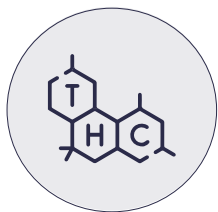
Medicinal Cannabis

These are prescription-only medicines regulated by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). Medicinal cannabis has been legal in the UK since November 2018. Predominantly prescribed in the private health sector via the Specials route, a small number of products have been approved by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) for specific conditions. May also be referred to as cannabis-based products for medicinal use in humans (CBPMs).



CBD products

Food products which are widely available on the high-street, in pharmacies and from online retailers, regulated by the Food Standards Agency (FSA). CBD products come in many forms, including edibles, cosmetics, topicals and vapes. The following guidance refers to those which are designed for human consumption only, such as oil drops or tinctures. There are no approved medical claims which can be made about CBD products.



THC and CBD

The two most common compounds found in cannabis plants. THC is psychoactive and CBD is not. In the UK, THC is illegal without a medicinal cannabis prescription.





Cannabis oil

A term specifically used to refer to any oil formulation of CBD. While widely used in the media, this wording should be avoided as it leads to confusion. If publishing, best practice is to include the nature of the product for clarity.



The following summary table distinguishes between prescription medicinal cannabis and the CBD products you'll find on the British high street.

 Medicinal Cannabis	 Retail CBD products
<p>Requires a prescription by a specialist doctor, not currently available from your GP.</p> <p>Private medicinal cannabis clinics are available nationwide. Patients can self-refer, or can be referred by their GP.</p> <p>Contains CBD and/or THC, with dosages decided by a specialist doctor.</p> <p>A medical product, regulated like any other by the MHRA, ensuring product quality and safety.</p> <p>Specialist doctors provide instructions for medicinal cannabis dosing and guidelines.</p> <p>Private prescription and consultation fees apply.</p> <p>Prescriptions may come in the form of oil drops, vapeables, capsules and dried flower.</p>	<p>No approved medical claims. Does not require a prescription prior to purchase.</p> <p>Can be purchased at major retailers, on the high street, in pharmacies, or online.</p> <p>Contains CBD as the key ingredient.</p> <p>Sold as a food product, not considered a medicine.</p> <p>The Food Standards Agency (FSA) recommends a maximum daily intake of 70mg of CBD.</p> <p>Products for sale in England and Wales must be on the FSA's official CBD register.</p> <p>Prices vary depending on brand and dosage.</p> <p>Products come in a wide variety of strengths and delivery methods, including oil drops, tinctures, capsules, other edibles and beverages, vapes, topicals, and cosmetic applications.</p>

Further media guidance can be found at these resources:

The government has published this [overview on what the law says](#) about medicinal cannabis.

See what the [Advertising Standards Agency](#) says about CBD, including advice on CBD product advertising.

[ASA advice for non-broadcast advertising](#) of CBD-containing products.

This [government fact sheet](#) details the Home Office rules on importing and exporting controlled drugs (medicinal cannabis) to and from the UK.

MHRA: A [guide](#) to what is a medicinal product.

FSA list of [permitted CBD products](#) (linked to a credible Novel Food application) for England and Wales.