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All the best cannabis growing lights.

What's the Big Deal About CBD?

If you're at all interested in cannabis news, it's very likely you've been hearing all the buzz about the medical benefits of CBD. As recreational weed becomes legal in more places and awareness of medical marijuana spreads, there has been more news (and [scientific research](#)) about cannabidiol (CBD) and its use in treating various ailments. That's all well and good, but what *is* CBD and how does it differ, in terms of the plant and the properties, to the cannabis that we know and love?

How Does CBD Differ From THC?

The simple answer is: THC ([Tetrahydrocannabinol](#)) will get you high and CBD ([Cannabidiol](#)) won't. But there's a lot more to it than that.

Let's start with the plant itself. [Hemp and cannabis](#) (marijuana) are two subspecies of the plant genus and species *cannabis sativa*. Both types contain THC and CBD, though not in equal amounts. Industrial hemp is used to produce clothing, rope, textiles, fuel, oils, seeds and other commercially available items. The hemp plant contains low levels of THC (the psychoactive compound) — by law, up to 0.3 percent. Hemp products, including CBD oil, are legal in all 50 U.S. states if it comes from industrial hemp. The cannabis plant is grown for its psychoactive properties and for medical use. Cannabis also contains CBD, though not as much as hemp does. Products from the cannabis plant are heavily regulated, according to the state you live in.

While it's not entirely straightforward, hemp tends to have higher levels of CBD (an anti-psychoactive compound) and lower levels of THC, while cannabis has less CBD and more THC.

Medical Benefits of CBD Oil

[Studies have shown](#) that CBD can be effectively used to relieve chronic pain and inflammation, anxiety, depression and sleep disorders. It has garnered [rave reviews for treating anxiety](#), in particular. It is believed that CBD may boost brain signaling via its serotonin receptors, and the idea of increasing serotonin in the brain to boost one's mood and reduce anxiety is already the basis of current anti-anxiety medications. CBD has also been found, in early preclinical trials, to regenerate neurons in the hippocampus, a critical area of the brain. Those with anxiety or depression will frequently have a smaller hippocampus, so CBD shows great promise in treating both conditions.

An important point for people with anxiety: the THC in marijuana [may cause or worsen anxiety](#) in some people, whereas CBD will lessen it. It can even counter the effects of the THC. If this is an issue for you, aim for a strain with more CBD and less (or no) THC.

There are other potential [CBD medical benefits](#). In addition to relieving anxiety, reducing pain and helping you sleep, CBD oil may also relieve depression, alleviate cancer-related symptoms, support heart health, reduce acne and offer help to multiple sclerosis and epilepsy sufferers. It may also have antipsychotic effects and anti-tumor properties — and could be helpful for diabetes prevention and substance abuse treatment.

Great! Can I Grow Hemp for CBD Oil in my Closet?

Hold up, cowboy (or cowgirl). Before you try that, you should know that industrial hemp can grow 2-4 meters (6.5-13 feet)! Hemp is considered a farm crop, so unless you have a few acres of field in your backyard, it's probably best to purchase CBD oil that has already been extracted. As for that hemp seed oil at your health food store — while it's rich in omega-3s and will support your immune system, it doesn't contain any CBD.

What Type of CBD Oil Should I Buy?

CBD can be found in both hemp and cannabis plants. However, [according to WikiLeaf](#), you're better off with CBD oil from cannabis than CBD oil from hemp, due to the chance of contamination. Industrial hemp is grown outdoors with less control over environment. Also, the fact that it's legally available across the U.S. and is sold online makes it more of a "wild west" situation, with less regulation and quality control. And speaking of hustlers, [Project CBD](#), a highly regarded CBD clearinghouse, [published a report](#) called "Hemp Oil Hustlers," about certain unscrupulous sellers hawking "hemp oil" with CBD that was found not to be safe. Be careful out there, folks! If you can, support your local dispensary. You'll be helping the local economy while protecting your health and getting a superior CBD product.