The Plant & Strains

indica_flower.jpg

Cannabis has been used as a medicine for thousands of years, all over the world. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, it was widely used in western medicine. Cannabis prohibition forced cannabis outside of legal medicine, and severely limited research opportunities.

As a plant, there are two main families of cannabis, *INDICA* and *SATIVA*. There are many strains of the plant, some pure Indicas, some pure Sativas, and others crosses of the two. Each strain of cannabis contains different ratios of cannabinoids, thus giving them a unique therapeutic effect.

Sativas

Generally, the Sativa plant is a taller and lankier variety, characterized by narrow serrated leaves and loose spear-like flower clusters that can be extremely resinous.

The primary effects of Sativas are on the mind and emotions. These benefits can be particularly helpful for the psychological aspects of many illnesses, giving people an increased sense of well-being. Due to the stimulating nature of Sativas, they are generally better for daytime use. Caution should also be taken for people experiencing hightened anxiety or those with mental health conditions.

Some therapeutic uses of Sativas:

- Reduces depression, elevates mood
- Relieves headaches and migraines
- Energizes and stimulates
- Increases focus and creativity
- Reduces nausea
- Stimulates appetite

Indicas

Indica plants are normally shorter and stockier plants than Sativas. They have wide, deeply serated leaves and a compact and dense flower cluster.

The effects of Indicas are predominantly physical and sedative. Due to the relaxing nature of Indicas, they are best used for non-active times of the day, and before bed.

Some therapeutic uses of Indicas:

- Reduces pain
- Relaxes muscles
- Relieves spasms
- Reduces inflammation
- Aids in sleep
- Reduces anxiety and stress
- Reduces nausea
- Stimulates appetite
- Relieves headaches and migraines
- Reduces intra-ocular pressure
- Anti-convulsant
- Reduces seizure frequency

Cross Strains

Hybrid strains are the result of cross pollination of various strains. The characteristics, and hence the effects, of one strain will usually be dominant.

- An *Indica-dominant cross* will be effective for pain relief, with the Sativa component helping with energy and activity levels. Such a strain is ideal for daytime pain relief.
- A *Sativa-dominant cross* will be helpful in stimulating the appetite, with the Indica component increasing muscle relaxation. This strain would be ideal for daytime appetite stimulation.
- All strains of cannabis may increase appetite and reduce nausea, however crosses are reported to work most effectively.