

# The CBD Handbook

The image features a blue glass bottle in the foreground, with a glass dropper positioned above it, dispensing a single drop of golden liquid. The background is a composite of green leaves, a chemical structure diagram with 'OH' groups, and a bright yellow light source.

Using and Understanding  
CBD and Medical Cannabis

**KARIN MALLION**

# THE CBD HANDBOOK





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*Karin Mallion BSc (Hons) MNIMH*



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*The healing comes from nature and  
not from the physician, therefore the  
physician must start from nature,  
with an open mind ...  
~ Paracelsus*

*It has been quite a journey writing this book,  
through some very turbulent times and  
I have had help from some amazing friends  
and family members. I would like to thank  
Emma Dalton for always being there with  
wisdom and inspiration and keeping me going!  
Thanks also to Bev Harrow, for your inimitable  
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knowledge, and your friendship.*



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## INTRODUCTION

CBD is the “buzz word” product in the UK with an estimated 1000 new users each month. Press reports have abounded regarding the efficacy of CBD and its “wonder drug” healing properties for almost any ailment, from cancer through to epilepsy, multiple sclerosis to headaches, anxiety, and probably hangnails! CBD is shorthand for canabidiol, an active but not intoxicating ingredient of medical marijuana (cannabis).

The number of people using this substance is ever growing, but there seems to be a great deal of confusion about what it actually does, how to use it, herb–prescription drug interactions, and the difference between different products. Our television screens and newspapers have been deluged with a profusion of vastly differing stories and it has featured on various consumer programmes such as *Trust Me, I’m a Doctor* and the investigation of the *Gogglebox* “couple” (Steph and Dom Parker), who wanted to use CBD to help their son with epilepsy. There was even a programme where a group of celebrities drove around the United States in a flower-power bus sampling a variety of different substances, visiting cannabis pharmacies and growers. These media reports have increased the public’s appetite for CBD exponentially.

However, there is still such a great lack of knowledge, information, and guidance about this product in the UK, with an abundance of “internet help forums” springing up and many manufacturers of “CBD oil” products trying to get onto the bandwagon—often with products of dubious quality and vague ingredients. Many manufacturers are using “isolates”—that is, making use of an extracted CBD and not whole plant extract: these contain no other cannabinoids and are far cheaper to buy than the superior whole plant extract products. However, it gives many small companies a chance to get into what they perceive as the lucrative CBD market without a large investment.

As a medical herbalist, I am, of course, interested in CBD and cannabis, although my personal use had been distinctly limited—the usual late teenage attempts, which always resulted in significant malaise: the wobbliness, nausea, and a general “seasick feeling” that cannabis gave me meant it was not for me. But in 2017 everyone was talking about it, and as a health shop owner, manufacturers were contacting me with their various products to try with my clients and patients. I became more interested and began to stock some of these products, noting that some had better effects on some patients than on others. The descriptions on the containers were all different; there seemed to be no uniformity across the products. However, I did notice that some products produced little to no effect while some had a significant effect. My first “amazing” result was with a customer who had been diagnosed with prostate cancer and whose prostate-specific antigen markers were extremely high. Within three months of using an over the counter product from my little health shop, his PSA markers were in the normal range and the cancer was operable and he made a complete recovery. Both the customer and I were stunned that a few drops of oil could have this marked effect.

At that time, I was not just running my own health shop but also working part-time for an herbal medicine supplier and

manufacturer. I had been discussing the results I was seeing through CBD products with my colleagues, and between us we decided it was time to offer this product to medical herbalists so that they could buy it from the same place they buy their herbal supplies—as a “one-stop shop”.

An enormous selection and variety of CBD products is now available in the UK marketplace, some from dubious and some from not so dubious sources. There are slanderous allegations, power struggles, and spiteful infighting within these various companies. I have seen everything from CBD chewing gum and drinks, to lotions, potions, capsules, massage oils, and sublingual oils, and many more. There are even CBD pillows touted to give you a better night’s sleep! Herbalists have been using hops and lavender in sachets and pillows for years, but they don’t appear to have quite the pizzazz that accompanies CBD.

Meanwhile, back in 2017, I had contacted several manufacturers of CBD oil products and asked if I could visit them, and perhaps see how they made their product and learn more about it. What was worrying to me was that there were so very many different products available—and my patients did not know which one was the best. Very importantly no one was able to give them information regarding contraindications with existing medication, or even what this product could do for them. The manufacturers have their hands tied as under the terms of the Medicine and Health Regulatory Authority they are not able to say “what the product is good for” and it is only sold as a “food supplement” or “health supplement”—because of the sensitive nature of it being “cannabis” the government has been cautious with its regulations. These companies are suppliers and manufacturers, not medical professionals, and thus cannot give medical advice.

Equally, medical herbalists and homeopaths, osteopaths and acupuncturists, and other complementary practitioners are not trained in the benefits or contraindications of cannabis when used in this way. The herbal manufacturer I was working



with thought it would be a good idea to research more about the product and put together a presentation for herbalists that would give them an indication of what could be supported or helped using cannabis extracts.

As my interest in cannabis and CBD grew, and I saw the results that both my family and patients were seeing from the use of cannabis, at the behest of my employers, Planta Medica Ltd, I wrote a seminar contribution to discuss the therapeutic implications of cannabis, which I presented in the spring of 2018 to a group of medical herbalists. This talk became so popular that my colleague Emma Dalton and I ended up presenting to a variety of herbalists, homeopaths, kinesiologists, GPs, nurses, and other medical and complementary practitioners. These were extremely well attended and demand and bookings for these talks flowed in.

I was subsequently offered employment by one of the CBD companies with an opportunity to go to the island of Guernsey to set up a herbal practice and a shop with herbal remedies, selling a range of high-quality cannabis extracts to the general public. Because of the previously mentioned legislation and rules set by the MHRA and the fact that manufacturers were unable to say anything about their products and could make no medicinal claims, the issue was how should the manufacturers advise their customers which product to use, and how might it help them with various health concerns? This is confusing for therapists and consumers alike. It was considered that my status as a medical herbalist put me in a good position to advise people as to which products to use and how to use them.

I stayed in Guernsey for around fifteen months—a wonderful experience seeing thousands of patients and customers, many of whom became regulars, so it was possible to see improvements in health and hear their stories and experiences. I returned to England in the autumn of 2019 and continued to work with Planta Medica who by this point had bought extraction machinery, set up laboratories, and were looking

at manufacturing a product from scratch—so that the herbalists who bought its products would be assured of high quality and purity without the doubt that attaches to some of the other companies selling these products. We launched the company Cannamedica in January 2020 (just before the first COVID-19 lockdown was imposed).

What follows is mostly a compilation of literature collated from books, a wide variety of internet sites, personal experience, and case histories. I hope you find it useful.

Karin Mallion BSc (Hons) MNIMH, medical herbalist  
November 2020



## Using and Understanding CBD and Medical Cannabis

In recent years, the popularity of CBD products has exploded, with 'wonder drug' claims being made for nearly every ailment ranging from cancer to anxiety.

*The CBD Handbook* is an accessible guide written for patients and practitioners alike, dispelling the cloud of confusion that hangs over its use. It provides a history and overview of CBD and cannabis, explores the endocannabinoid system, looks at different strains, phytochemistry and delivery methods, and lists in detail which conditions and ailments it may help with. Synergistic herbs and contra-indications with pharmaceutical and plant medicines are also considered.

With useful case histories, guidance on legal issues and applications for clinical use, this is an indispensable manual for navigating the CBD landscape.

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"As herbalists we are often asked, how is it that each herb we read about can be used for so many conditions? It makes no sense! Well this book answers this and many other questions through an elegant marriage of physiology, plant chemistry and a deep knowledge of herbal medicine. Prepare for a scientific roller coaster ride in this guide to the therapeutic uses of cannabis. A must for all, practitioners and public alike wanting to know more about this amazing plant."

**Tony Carter** FNIMH, Dip Phyt, Director, Planta Medica (Co-op) Ltd

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"A truly brilliantly executed book, which is easy to understand but in an informative way. A really good book for practitioners."

**Peter Martin**, Dr (Osteopathy) General Osteopathic Council

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**KARIN MALLION** is a qualified medical herbalist. She has owned and managed three health stores, one of which specialised in cannabinoid therapy, while simultaneously running a successful herbal medicine practice. Her interest in cannabis arose after patients began to report significant improvement in health issues after CBD use. Subsequently, she studied, researched and wrote a seminar for complementary and alternative practitioners to guide them in using CBD for patients.

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