



What's the Difference Between Full Spectrum, Broad Spectrum & Isolate CBD?

Posted to IrieBliss.com CBD/Wellness Education | December 9, 2020

By Selene Angier

One of the most common questions our nurses are asked during CBD consultations is: What's the difference between full spectrum, broad spectrum, and isolate extracts? All the ins and outs and definitions and formats can get confusing, we know.

That's why we're catching up with nurse Jodi Chapin, a #420RN and cannabis nursing specialist. She's also the resident RN here at Irie Bliss Wellness, and a cannabis and CBD patient herself, so she understands we all have different levels of CBD experience and knowledge.

"Everybody has a health issue they're trying to improve, and many of us are turning to alternative plant medicines like cannabis and CBD to help," says nurse Jodi.

"It's important to understand the different types of extracts and how they may help you or interact with other medicines and conditions. Pregnancy, certain diagnoses, your age, previous cannabis experience, and drug test issues will all play a role into whether a full spectrum, broad spectrum, or isolate is best for you."

We'll dig in to fuller definitions and benefits of full spectrum vs. broad vs. isolate in a minute, but let's start at the top:

What is a cannabinoid?

The cannabis plant is made up of several organic compounds, including cannabinoids, [terpenes](#), flavonoids, and essential oils. Among the 100+ different cannabinoids (pronounced *kuh-nab-eh-noid*) found in hemp and marijuana strains, the two most common are the two (surprise!) you've likely heard of:

- Cannabidiol: aka CBD, which provides myriad health benefits and is non-intoxicating though still mood enhancing (pronounced *kanna-beh-dial*)
- Tetrahydrocannabinol: that long mouthful you probably know better as THC, which is the psychoactive cannabinoid in the cannabis plant (pronounced *tet-ruh-hi-dro-ka-nab-eh-do*)

The [effects of CBD and THC](#) on our endocannabinoid system are well studied. Scientists are also studying four other cannabinoids for medicinal benefits. These round out the "Big Six":

- CBG / Cannabigerol
- CBN / Cannabinol
- CBC / Cannabichromene
- THCV / Tetrahydrocannabivarin

Which type of CBD extract is right for you?

Essentially, all CBD products can be categorized into one of 3 extract types: full spectrum, broad spectrum, and isolate. Simply put, think of them as containing "all," "most," or "one select" of the cannabinoids.

A quick visual exercise/shortcut: picture the 100+ cannabinoids in hemp as being a rainbow – or spectrum, as it were. Full spectrum has *all* the colors of the hemp rainbow, broad spectrum has *most* of the colors, and isolates have *one* single “isolated” color (hint: it’s green!).

Full spectrum definition

Full-spectrum extracts contain all phytochemicals naturally found in the plant – that means CBD, THC, other trace minor cannabinoids, terpenes, and essential oils. Full-spectrum extracts from hemp contain a *negligible* amount of THC content – below 0.3%.

So, what are some of the benefits of full-spectrum CBD? In two words: the entourage effect. This is the natural phenomenon where the full spectrum of active compounds extracted from hemp work together to amplify the health benefits of each individual cannabinoid.

“My first suggestion in working with new clients is to start them on a full-spectrum product, because it has that wonderful entourage effect,” says nurse Jodi. “This includes trace amounts of THC, which boost the effects of all the other cannabinoids and terpene compounds.”

“Oftentimes some of us – especially elderly people – hear the word ‘THC,’ and avoid it. But full-spectrum products have near-zero psychoactive effects,” nurse Jodi continues. “Old or young, our bodies respond positively to the entourage effect because of its lock-and-key mechanism on the endocannabinoid system.”

Although non-psychoactive, full-spectrum CBD is not recommended for pregnant women, children, or people who are drug tested.

What are some good full-spectrum CBD products to try?

Many Irie Bliss Wellness products contain full-spectrum extracts, including:

[Irie Bliss Liquid Sunshine CBD Tincture: The limited-edition 2000mg Liquid](#)

Sunshine is handcrafted small batch CBD by Irie Bliss, in partnership with Black Horse Hemp Farm in Vermont and our extractor in Maine. This CBD tincture drop formula contains a proprietary terpene blend and comes in 3 other sizes: 300mg, 600mg, or 1200mg.

[Apothecary Care Water Soluble CBD Tincture](#): This nano-emulsified liquid concentrate is perfect in your morning smoothie or evening chamomile tea. If you want to drink your CBD, always look for “[water soluble CBD](#)” on the label, because CBD has to be specially formulated to dissolve in liquids. Water soluble CBD is our favorite choice for “mocktails” to unwind at the end of the day when foregoing the after-work wine.

Broad spectrum definition

Broad-spectrum extracts contain cannabidiol (CBD) and all the other compounds in the plant, *except* THC. THC is completely removed after the initial extraction.

Benefits of broad-spectrum CBD: Broad-spectrum extracts contain multiple minor cannabinoids and other beneficial plant compounds so they also produce the “entourage effect,” but *without* the THC.

“If you’re worried about drug testing, or if you’ve previously experienced sensitivity to the cannabinoid THC, I would suggest starting on a broad-spectrum formula,” says nurse Jodi.

“Broad-spectrum extracts are also often the first choice for parents starting their children on a hemp cannabis regimen when seeking natural alternatives to conventional medications. It is also the safest way to introduce CBD to pets, since animals can be sensitive to THC.”

Looking for a broad-spectrum CBD product?

We got you. Here are a few options:

[Immune Boom 500mg CBD Tincture](#): Infused with our signature terpene profile, as well as echinacea, elderberry & vitamin C, this fruity-tart formula sets you up to fight the winter cold season.

[Spirit Animal Irie Bliss CBD Pet Tinctures](#): Containing wild Alaskan salmon oil and CBD, this has been one of our most successful lines. Humans see the difference in the quality of life of their furry friends almost immediately.

Isolate definition

CBD isolates contain *only* the cannabidiol (CBD) cannabinoid. CBD isolate is THC-free and usually 99% pure, meaning that one gram of isolate powder carries about 990 mg of CBD. You can now procure many of the minor cannabinoids in an isolated form.

Benefits of CBD isolate

“CBD isolates are great for amplifying the effects of another cannabis medicine, be it a THC, full, or broad spectrum product. If something is higher in THC, but you want to minimize the psychoactive effects, an isolate is the perfect way to counterbalance things,” says nurse Jodi. “CBD isolates do not offer an entourage effect though, so if you don’t notice relief on an isolate, try switching to a broad or full-spectrum formula.”

Isolates are commonly used for pain, anxiety, insomnia, inflammation, and epilepsy, and can also be a good choice for children, pregnant women, or for those concerned with failing a drug test. The benefits of isolates can be felt at up to 25mg per serving, but are shown to level off at higher doses.

Want to try an isolate CBD? A few of our products to consider:

[Goddess CBD Massage Oil](#): This is our essential massage oil, virtually odorless, and safe to use externally during massages or (ooh la la) internally. It can also be used on any swollen or painful area. Great for everything, from under-eye puffiness to diaper rash to soothe irritated skin from burns, scrapes, or bites.

[Goddess Vegan CBD Gummies](#): Our very own signature vegan gummy, containing 10mg of CBD from isolate. It is a great starting product to see if you respond to CBD.

“Understanding formulas, extracts, and carrier modes can be overwhelming. Always ask questions and make sure you’re making an educated and informed decision. You are your best advocate, and it is up to you to inform — and maybe even educate — your primary care providers,” says nurse Jodi. “If you’re looking for an alternative way to live your best life and become more educated on plant medicine, we’re here to help.”

[Book a CBD consultation with a Green Network Provider nurse today >>](#)

Connect with Jodi on 420rn.com and follow her on Instagram [@jodi420rn](https://www.instagram.com/jodi420rn)

Instagram Companion Asset

**WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE
FULL vs BROAD SPECTRUM
vs ISOLATE ?**

- * **FULL SPECTRUM** extracts contain *all* phytochemicals naturally found in the cannabis plant — CBD, minimal THC (below 0.3%), other minor cannabinoids, terpenes, and essential oils.
- * **BROAD SPECTRUM** extracts contain CBD and all the other compounds in the plant, *except* THC.

FULL + BROAD extracts offer the "entourage effect," when active cannabinoids work together to amplify each other's health benefits

- * **CBD ISOLATE** contains *only* the CBD cannabinoid, so it is THC-free.

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