

What Are Terpenes?

Terpenes are aromatic compounds produced by plants. Terpene varieties with desirable aromas are used in foods and perfumes. They can also be used as ingredients in essential oils and in pharmaceuticals.

Terpenes in cannabis plants

- Responsible for the strong smell that is produced by marijuana
- There are over 100 different terpenes in cannabis plants
- Marijuana strains are cultivated to produce terpenes that give the strain a particular aroma, such as citrus fruit, berries, or herbs.

Terpenes with medicinal benefits

Some people suggest that terpenes in cannabis also have specific physical or mental effects. It is true that research has found that some terpenes have biological effects or medical benefits in laboratory settings or when used in pharmaceutical products. Some examples of these include:

- The terpene **linalool** has anti-inflammatory properties
- **D-limonene** has shown that it may slow the growth of cancer
- **Myrcene** can have a sedative effect

However, *these properties have not been fully studied in the context of cannabis.* You may hear that a terpene in a cannabis product helps with sleep, relaxation, or even relief of specific medical symptoms. While different strains of marijuana do have different effects, it is unclear whether terpenes contribute to those differences. A terpene that works as part of a pharmaceutical product or in a lab may not have the same effect when taken with all of the other compounds in a cannabis product.

As always, your doctor or dispensary staff can help answer any questions you have about which products or strains make the most sense for your specific condition or symptoms.