

# Medicinal cannabis wafers available to select number of Queenslanders

Australia is producing a cutting edge world first medicinal cannabis wafer that provides a simpler solution than other cannabis products.

The product called Xativa is a tablet which dissolves under the tongue and research suggests it can help with pain, nausea, and certain motor diseases.

The company which produces it, iX Biopharma, says its patented wafer technology overcomes three common problems with the delivery of medicinal cannabis - lack of fixed dosages, inconsistent absorption and variable or poor bioavailability.



Australia is producing a cutting-edge cannabis product. (9News)

Janakan Krishnarajah, iX Biopharma's COO, says the benefits of the technology could also be extended to other medications.

"It's a highly porous little disk ... we developed it to improve the administration of a variety of drugs," Mr Krishnarajah said.

"The wafer itself actively disintegrates so there's no need to swallow it which can be an advantage when looking at certain populations."

Dr Ben Jansen, from Cannabis Doctors Australia, says Xativa could have benefits for both young and old people with certain conditions.

"It's the ease of use with a wafer - it goes into the mouth and it's absorbed quite rapidly into the body," Dr Jansen told 9News.

"The wafer I see being quite helpful with children who won't necessarily be able to swallow a pill or tolerate an oil which can taste a bit different."

Distributor Cannatrek is currently harvesting medicinal cannabis under government permits at its top secret facility in Brisbane where the Xativa wafers are being stored.

Craig Thompson, a patient access consultant with Cannatrek, says it's also easier for patients to ensure they're taking the correct amount.

"It's a fixed dose so the patient knows they're taking a fixed amount all the time," Craig Thompson from Cannatrek said.

### **Access requires GP approval**

The product is available now to Queenslanders who meet a strict criteria.

"One is a chronic condition lasting longer than three months and the other is having failed on first line medication or experiencing side effects," Mr Thompson explained.

While the wafers are classed as an unapproved product, they're available through the Therapeutic Goods Administration's Special Access Scheme.



The cannabis wafer is called Xativa. (9News)

Your doctor will need to make an application to the TGA on your behalf and if approved, you take that approval and the prescription to a pharmacy where they will order the wafers.

The process is estimated to take around five days.

A month's supply of the product, about 60 wafers, will set you back \$173 but it is cheaper than current options on the market.

The medicinal cannabis industry is only just starting to take off in Australia.

The country's first fully operational medicinal cannabis farm opened on the Sunshine Coast in early 2019, operated by Medifarm.

Within a decade, it's thought the industry is projected to be worth \$1.2 billion.

As of August last year only a few thousand Australians had been prescribed medicinal cannabis by a doctor despite the treatment being legalised by the federal government in February 2016.

Original Source : <https://www.9news.com.au/national/medicinal-cannabis-wafers-available-to-select-number-of-queenslanders/46798610-0609-416b-9639-c95cbdd85de5>