



WHOLISTIC **RELEAF**™

A DIVISION OF  
WHOLISTIC PEDIATRICS & FAMILY CARE  
ESTABLISHED IN 2005

## *General Information Guide*

Monday-Friday  
8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

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## *A Different Kind of Medical Cannabis Provider...*

When searching for a medical cannabis provider, it is critical to consider not only the cost involved, but also experience. Dr. David Berger, the founder and medical director of Wholistic ReLeaf, is a pioneer in wholistic pediatric health and adult wellness, and specializes in treating chronic conditions with natural treatments, including medical cannabis.

In addition to helping get medical cannabis legalized in the State of Florida, Dr. David is considered the State's most experienced medical cannabis doctor who treats both pediatric and adult patients. Dr. David has extensive, practical experience with cannabis dosing and provides consultations and treatments tailored to each patient's individual needs. This is incredibly important, especially when utilizing medical cannabis to treat children.

All Wholistic ReLeaf providers and staff are committed to providing patients the best possible care, while also maintaining strict compliance with the ever-shifting legal landscape of medical cannabis. We will continue to update our policies as the State of Florida's medical cannabis laws evolve.

Our goal at Wholistic ReLeaf, is to empower families and patients to choose the best treatment approach for the patient's medical condition. We are devoted solely to the evaluation and certification of qualified patients, who meet The State of Florida's legal requirements for receiving medical cannabis. The State of Florida strictly regulates low-THC (CBD) and THC-containing medical cannabis. Beginning the process of medical



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cannabis certification can be a bit overwhelming, so we have compiled all the details to make it as easy as possible.

## *Eligibility for Medical Cannabis*

### **Requirements for Medical Cannabis Certification**

The following requirements must be satisfied to be eligible for certification in the State of Florida:

#### **(1) Residency**

- Must have proof of Florida residency
- or -
- Be a “snowbird” or seasonal Florida resident who temporarily resides in the state for a period of at least 31 consecutive days in each calendar year, maintains a temporary residence in the state, returns to the state or jurisdiction of his or her residence at least one time during each calendar year, and is registered to vote or pay income tax in another state or jurisdiction.

#### **(2) Qualifying Condition**

Patients must have one or more of the qualifying medical conditions listed below.

- **Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)** - *same class & kind conditions/symptoms include: Agitation, Aggression, Anxiety, Autism (if behavioral, anxiety, aggression, insomnia), Bipolar, Depression, Decreased ability to think, Disruptive and violent behaviors, Fatigue, Insomnia, Irritable/disturbed behaviors, Mood swings/disturbance,*



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*Obsessive-compulsive symptoms (OCD), Panic attacks, Racing thoughts, Social anxiety, Stress, Tics, Tourette's Syndrome, Tremors*

- **Multiple Sclerosis** - same class & kind conditions/symptoms include:  
*Alopecia Areata, Arthritis, Autoimmune diseases, Autoimmune encephalopathy, Autoimmune hemolytic anemia, Bladder dysfunction, Cerebral Folate Receptor Autoimmunity/Deficiency, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Chronic headaches, Chronic itchiness, Connective tissue disorders with various neurological manifestations, Constipation, Decreased cognitive function, Diabetes, Dizziness/vertigo, Ehlers-Danlosm, Fibromyalgia/Myopathic Encephalopathy, Graves Disease, Guillain-Barre Syndrome, Hashimoto's Thyroiditis, Idiopathic thrombocytopenic, Joint inflammation and pain, Juvenile Idiopathic/Rheumatoid arthritis, Lethargy (decreased energy), Lupus, Migraines, Muscle spasms, Muscle weakness, Muscular pain, Musculoskeletal pain, Myasthenia Gravis, Nerve pain, Neuropathic pain, Numbness/tingling, PANDAS/PANS, Pelvic pain, Polyarteritis nodosa, Psoriasis debilitating autoimmune, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Scleroderma/systemic sclerosis, Sjögren's syndrome, Swallowing difficulty, T-cell mediated diseases, Vitiligo*
- **Parkinson's Disease** - same class & kind conditions/symptoms include:  
*Amnesia, Autism (if communication issues), Chorea, Cognition changes, Cognitive impairment, Decreased ability to communicate, Decreased focus and concentration (inattentive, absent-mindedness), Dementia, Difficulty*



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*speaking, Difficulty walking, Dystonia, Huntinton's Disease, Inattention, Movement disorders, Restless Leg Syndrome, Stiff/rigid muscles, Tardive Diskinesia, Tremors*

- **Crohn's Disease** - *same class & kind conditions/symptoms include: Abdominal pain, Celiac, Chronic abdominal pain, Chronic diarrhea, Chronic intestinal inflammation, Chronic fatigue, Cramping, Diverticulitis, Inflammatory bowel disease, Intestinal gas, Irritable Bowel Syndrome, Loose stools, Pancreatitis, Poor appetite, Ulcerative Colitis, Weight loss*
- **HIV/AIDS** - *same class & kind conditions/symptoms include: ADD/ADHD (HIV-Associated Neurocognitive Disorder), Anorexia, Loss of appetite, Chronic nausea, Chronic vomiting, Cognition changes, Chronic fatigue, Deficits in attention, learning, concentration, attention, and focus, Dementia, Eczema, Inattention, Inflammatory and eczematous eruptions, Poor appetite Skin pathology, Weight loss*
- **Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS)** aka "Lou Gehrig's Disease" - *same class & kind conditions/symptoms include: Chronic dysphagia, Difficulty swallowing, Decreased ability to communicate*
- **Cancer** - *same class & kind conditions/symptoms include: Anorexia, Bone pain, Chronic nausea, Chronic vomiting, Lack of appetite, Weight loss*
- **Epilepsy**- *same class & kind conditions/symptoms include: Seizure disorders*
- **Glaucoma** - *same class & kind conditions/symptoms include: Chronic eye pain*
- **A Terminal illness** (not diagnosed by Wholistic ReLeaf)
- **Medical Conditions of the Same Class or Kind** as those found in the conditions listed above.



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## What does “Same Class or Kind” mean?

Under Florida law, if all other eligibility criteria are met, a qualified physician may certify patients for medical cannabis if they are suffering from symptoms similar to those exhibited in one of the listed conditions. For example, in Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), symptoms typically include debilitating anxiety, panic, depression, violent tendencies, or insomnia. A patient suffering from these symptoms could be eligible to be certified even if they did not have a PTSD diagnosis. Likewise, a patient suffering from a similar chronic, debilitating symptoms, such as those commonly seen with Multiple Sclerosis (such as listed above), may be eligible for medical cannabis certification. Additionally, people with ALS and Parkinson’s Disease may experience difficulty speaking and comprehending. Many people with autism suffer from similarly debilitating, limited ability to communicate. Thus, people with autism and related disorders may be eligible for certification due to their condition being of the “same class or kind” as those listed above.

## Special Circumstances: Pediatrics, Terminal Conditions, & Pregnancy

### Pediatric Patients

#### 1. *Second Letter of Recommendation*

- Any minor under 18-years-old must have a second physician who concurs in writing that the potential *benefits* of treating the patient with medical cannabis *outweigh the risks* involved. The concurring physician does NOT need to be certified by the State to order medical cannabis, nor does this physician need to formally document a recommendation in their records.
- Wholistic ReLeaf will coordinate with a second physician who can provide



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this documentation (for a \$75.00 fee), or the caregiver may provide a second letter of recommendation from a different doctor. The minor is not required to meet in person with the second physician writing the letter.

2. *Caregiver Assigned in State Registry*

- One OR two parents/legal guardians must be assigned within the State Registry to the certified child.
- A copy of the minor's birth certificate **OR** current record of registration from a Florida K-12 school must be provided to the State prior to receiving a caregiver card.
- A caregiver card enables the child's caregiver to obtain (and administer) medical cannabis from a certified Medical Marijuana Treatment Center (aka "dispensary"), on behalf of their child.

Terminal Medical Conditions

- The certifying doctor must attest that the patient has a terminal medical condition; however, the certifying doctor cannot make the initial determination.
- Documentation must be provided to Wholistic ReLeaf that states the patient's terminal status. The physician who originally documented the terminal condition does **not** need to recommend the patient be treated with medical cannabis.

Pregnancy

Patients that are pregnant may only be certified for **low-THC cannabis ("CBD")**.

**Please contact us to discuss specific questions related to the patient's circumstances.**



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## *How to Get Started*

### **The Patient Portal**

First, our practice will need basic contact information including a good working email address. This information is entered in our **Electronic Medical Record** system (also known as the **Patient Portal**). An invitation will be sent to this email address; please accept this invitation by clicking on the link in the body of the email. Future communication with our staff will take place within the Portal. This ensures a timely, complete, and protected patient medical record. The Patient Portal is where you will fill out all medical forms, which are referred to as “**Questionnaires**”. It is important that Questionnaires are filled out in their entirety and that **SUBMIT** (upper right corner of the screen) is pressed, otherwise the information may be lost in hyperspace and cannot be relayed to the doctor or needed recipients.

### **What is “Cannabis Certification” and why do I need it?**

The state of Florida legally requires every Medical Marijuana ID card recipient be certified by a qualified physician at least every 7 months. Therefore, an **in-person**, re-certification follow-up appointment is required by law to be completed every 7 months to keep your medical cannabis card valid within the State Registry. What you need before your appointment:

- A valid working email address to use in communications to the State of Florida
- A diagnosis that qualifies for medical cannabis (see above list of conditions)
- Medical documentation of your diagnosis (we can also request records from your other doctors)

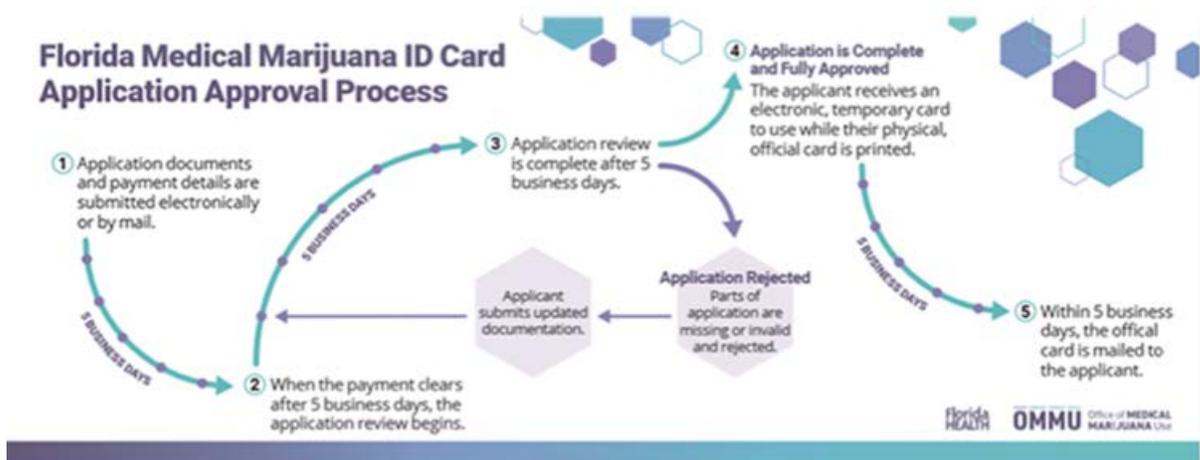


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- A form of payment for the certification appointment

## Florida Medical Marijuana ID Card Application Approval Process



- The Medical Marijuana Use Registry is an online, restricted access list of persons who are certified for medical cannabis use in the physical boundaries of the State of Florida
- The Office of Medical Marijuana Use (OMMU) and the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) are the governing bodies regulating Medical Marijuana ID card approval.
- Wholistic ReLeaf is not affiliated with the OMMU/the Registry. We are a separate entity from the Registry and do not determine approval for Medical Marijuana ID cards.
  1. After your appointment AND we have all necessary paperwork/documentation, Wholistic ReLeaf will enter patients into the State Registry.
  2. Patients submit a completed application to the OMMU (online or mailed in). We recommend applying to the State **online** for faster approval. The



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average turnaround time is currently 10 business days.

- **The OMMU requires a \$75.00 application fee *per applicant, per year.***
  
  - **PEDIATRIC PATIENTS: a second application and \$75.00 fee needs to be submitted to the OMMU to get a caregiver ID card, along with the pediatric patient ID card *YEARLY.***
3. When submitting an application, be sure to carefully submit all documentation required by the Registry. It is not uncommon for people to be denied due to insufficient documents submitted (for residency requirements or proof of birth). The best general rule of thumb for residency requirements is to submit a picture of your current Driver's License/State ID with an accurate home address that matches your application address. This allows your picture to auto populate from your Driver's License, onto the Medical Marijuana ID card application.
  4. An email will be sent to you from the State, at your email address. If you are approved this email acts as a temporary ID card until the hard-copy printed ID card is mailed.

### **Purchasing Medical Cannabis**

- After receiving state approval, patient's may then visit, call, or products delivered to one of the state-approved Medical Marijuana Treatment Centers (MMTC), also known as "dispensaries", to purchase products sanctioned by the State of Florida. Our office will inform the patient of approved Florida MMTCs upon notification of Registry approval.
- Our physicians certify patients up to a 70-day supply and up to 2 refills.



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- A certification expires after 210 days/7 months.
- Paper scripts are not used for medical cannabis. Wholistic ReLeaf physician orders will be in the State Registry electronically.

### **Follow-Up Appointments to Stay Active on the Registry**

- To remain active in the OMMU State Registry, Florida law requires each patient be recertified by a physician every 210 days (7 months). An in-office appointment **including a physical exam** is required as part of every recertification follow up appointment, every 210 days (7 months).
- At the conclusion of each certification appointment, Wholistic ReLeaf will schedule your follow up appointment and notify you 1 month prior to your orders expiring in the State Registry.



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## *Treatments*

*Medical cannabis dosage is derived from two naturally-occurring compounds:*

### **1. Low-THC (also referred to as Cannabidiol or CBD) Medical Cannabis**

The active ingredient of low-THC medical cannabis is cannabidiol (CBD). This treatment does not cause the euphoric effects typically attributed to cannabis consumption. CBD appears to be non-toxic to humans; though some mild side effects have been reported, including increased sleepiness, fatigue, diarrhea, and change in appetite.

### **2. Medical Cannabis (Higher doses of THC)**

THC is the ingredient that causes the euphoric/psychoactive effects of cannabis. Dosages needed to provide relief will vary from person to person, and with this, so can the euphoric effect. CBD works synergistically with the THC, and also can decrease the euphoric effects of THC. This allows for higher doses of THC to be used by lowering the side-effects of the THC.

### **3. “Ratio” containing products**

These products have both CBD and THC in various ratios for people who prefer a combination product. We recommend first starting CBD and THC separately, and then changing to a Ratio product if one works well for the patient.

*Medical Marijuana Treatment Center(MMTC) approach to classifying and describing cannabis products...*



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### **Strains which include Sativas, Indicas, or Hybrids**

Because patients react differently to the various THC-containing plants, some MMTCs differentiate their products based on whether it is derived from a sativa, indica, or hybrid plant. This is an area of controversy and some experts feel that these categories are outdated. However, sativas are thought to be generally uplifting and energetic, indicas are typically relaxing and sedating, while hybrids are somewhere in-between. However, just like other medications, people may react differently to different strains and what works for one person can work differently for others. This is just a general rule of thumb. To further distinguish the various products the plant types are classified by name. This is also known as the “strain”, and they all have their own lineage, much like a family tree. As more plants are bred/cross-bred, new strains may come about with other medicinal benefits.

### **Routes of Administration**

- Cannabis derivatives may be available in vapor, capsules, tinctures, oils, topical, intranasal, transdermal, suppository, and smokable (plant flower) forms.
- The active ingredients of medical cannabis may NOT be injected into the body.
- Availability and product forms may differ at different MMTCs.
- The maximum dose authorized and route of administration allowable will be determined by physician order.



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## *Fee Structure*

- Initial visit (Cannabis med management and education, if needed)  
**\$250**
- Follow-up visits\*\*\*Required every 7 months\*\*\*  
**\$150**
- Medical cannabis management with physician between follow-up visits (In-office or telemedicine)  
**\$150**
- Second Letter of Recommendation for pediatric patients  
**\$75**
- Smokable cannabis flower option added to orders  
**\$25 per certification**

### **Other Costs/Fees:**

- Medical Marijuana ID card application fee as determined by the OMMU Registry (paid to the State of Florida, not to Wholistic ReLeaf)\*\*\*Paid per card, per year, including caregiver cards\*\*\*  
**\$75**



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## *Frequently Asked Questions*

### **What treatment can I receive?**

Low-THC (CBD) and THC- containing medical cannabis products are available in a variety of different forms such as vaporized, capsules, oral liquids, transdermal creams/gels/patches, suppositories, and smokable/cannabis flower forms. Routes of administration will vary depending on what is ordered by Wholistic ReLeaf's certifying physician. Pediatric patients are not permitted smokable forms of cannabis unless they have a documented terminal condition.

### **What are cannabinoids (CBD)?**

The brain and other nerve cells, as well as other organs, have natural receptors for cannabinoids. Our bodies naturally make certain cannabinoids (called endocannabinoids), which help regulate pain-sensation, memory, stress response, social behavior, mood, immune function, sleep, and appetite. Some patients may benefit more from one type of cannabis treatment, while others best respond to a combination of treatments, that vary based on ratio or time of use throughout the day. To learn more about cannabinoids, please visit:

- [Project CBD](#) - provides a good explanation of how CBD works in the body
- [Realm of Caring](#) - maintains the most current CBD research.

### **How does cannabis interact with other medicines?**

Because cannabinoids are metabolized by the cytochrome P450 system in the liver, they may change the effects of certain seizure medications, such as valproate and clobazam. Some seizure medications, such as carbamazepine and phenytoin, may also reduce cannabinoid blood levels. If a patient is taking these drugs, the patient may require



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higher doses of cannabinoids. All medications will be cross-checked in a database for known cannabinoids interactions.

#### **What is involved in a certification appointment?**

- A full assessment of the patient's medical history
- A physical examination
- Confirmation of a previous diagnosis or a qualifying medical condition
- Determination that the medical use of cannabis would likely outweigh the potential health risks for the patient
- Documentation as to whether the patient is pregnant
- A review of the patient's controlled drug prescription history in the prescription drug monitoring program database (EFORSCE)
- A review of the Medical Marijuana Use Registry to confirm the patient does not have an active physician certification from another qualified physician
- Obtaining voluntary and informed written consent from the patient

#### **What are physicians' requirements for certifying patients for medical cannabis?**

Florida-licensed physicians who have successfully completed a 2-hour medical education course on medical cannabis and passed the examination may certify patients to receive medical cannabis. This is explained further on the Florida Department of Health's website.

#### **Do Wholistic ReLeaf doctors diagnose any qualifying conditions?**

A patient must have a valid pre-existing medical condition to make an initial appointment with our practice.

#### **How do I prove that I have a qualifying condition?**



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Please provide medical records stating the qualifying medical condition as previously documented by the patient's healthcare, therapist, or mental health provider. Current patients of Wholistic Pediatrics and Family Care (WPFC) may have sufficient documentation in their medical records to verify a qualifying condition. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis by our medical team. Please reach out to our staff for clarification if needed.

**Does Wholistic ReLeaf provide after-hours, emergency care, medication management, or any other medical services unrelated to cannabis, for its patients?**

No. For any additional medical care/advice, the patient's primary care physician or specialist (e.g., neurologist or oncologist) should be contacted. Full medical care including check-ups, after hours and urgent calls, nutritional evaluations, and biomedical treatments are available at Wholistic Pediatrics and Family Care. Please call 813-960-3415 for further information.

**Will a physician at Wholistic ReLeaf serve as the second “confirming” physician for pediatric second letters of recommendation?**

Yes, for a \$75 fee. The patient does not need to be a current patient with Wholistic ReLeaf. The patient will need to be registered in our electronic patient portal and release medical relevant medical information to Wholistic ReLeaf.

**What if my child needs a second physician letter and his pediatrician is unable to write one?**

We have another physician on staff who can provide a second letter of recommendation. The cost is \$75.



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**Where do I purchase cannabis once I am approved by the State?**

ONLY from licensed Medical Marijuana Treatment Centers (MMTCs) - also known as “dispensaries.” Each MMTC is allowed to sell anywhere in the state, and offer carry unique products. A patient can purchase products at any physical location *or* request home delivery via phone or internet orders. Individual cities are allowed to restrict Centers from opening physical locations within their borders but they are not allowed to prohibit delivery into their cities.

**How safe are the products that will be available?**

All products must be tested for purity and accuracy relative to the amount listed on the package label. Additionally, they should be labeled appropriately to make it easy to differentiate between different products and where they came from. Only purchase cannabis products from Medical Marijuana Treatment Centers (MMTCs) that clearly mark their products.

**Are insurance companies required to cover the costs associated with medical cannabis therapy?**

No, insurance companies are not required to pay/reimburse for medical cannabis or certification appointments.

**Do I have the legal right to use the medical cannabis while out of state?**

No, Florida Medical Marijuana ID card holders are not protected under law, if they were to transport medical cannabis across state lines or use it in other states.

**Is my employer obligated to allow the use of medical cannabis products in the workplace?**



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No, to the contrary, Florida law prohibits the use of medical cannabis at the patient's workplace. The Americans with Disabilities Act does not require employers to allow medical cannabis use as an accommodation for a patient's disability.

### **What are Florida's medical cannabis laws?**

The State of Florida strictly regulates medical cannabis. To maintain compliance with all applicable state laws, we will occasionally be required to update our policies. If such changes occur, we will make all reasonable efforts to keep our patients and families up-to-date and in compliance with all applicable laws. To learn more, please visit <https://knowthefactsmmj.com/rules-and-regulations/>

*\*Some excerpts provided by the Florida Medical Association's "Florida Physician's Low-THC" Continuing Medical Education Course, released 7/15/16*



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## *Helpful Resources*

- Florida Department of Health Office of Medical Marijuana Use (OMMU)  
<http://knowthefactsmmj.com/>
- Help with Applying for your Medical Marijuana ID card  
<https://knowthefactsmmj.com/patients/cards/#apply>
- Wholistic ReLeaf Patient Portal  
<https://charmphr.com>
- Florida Laws and Statutes regarding medical cannabis  
[http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&URL=0300-0399/0381/Sections/0381.986.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0300-0399/0381/Sections/0381.986.html)
- Realm of Caring - a foundation dedicated to research, education, and advocacy for cannabis  
[www.theroc.us](http://www.theroc.us)
- Leafly - a resource providing information about various strains and treatment forms of medical cannabis, including patient reviews and Medical Cannabis Treatment Centers: [www.leafly.com](http://www.leafly.com)
- Leaf Science - a good general resource for all things medical-cannabis related, with information that helps people *weigh the risks and benefits of treatment*:  
[www.leafscience.com](http://www.leafscience.com)
- Wholistic Pediatrics & Family Care - Dr. Berger's primary care/consulting practice  
[www.wholisticfamilycare.com](http://www.wholisticfamilycare.com)



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## **Telemedicine**

Under Florida law, “telemedicine” means the practice of medicine by a licensed Florida physician or physician assistant where patient care, treatment, or services are provided through the use of medical information exchanged from one site to another via electronic communications. Telemedicine does not include health care services provided solely through an audio only telephone, email messages, text messages, facsimile transmission, U.S. Mail, and/or other parcel service.

Telemedicine is not permitted for cannabis certifying consultations. A patient must be seen in the office to be certified. However, additional medical cannabis treatment management may be needed in between certification consultations. For these non-certification appointments we offer the convenience of telemedicine.

Florida telemedicine law requires visual interaction between the physician and the patient. Wholistic ReLeaf utilizes the HIPAA-compliant video conferencing software, *Zoom*, which is similar to Skype, FaceTime, or Google Hangouts. The standard of care remains the same regardless of whether a Florida licensed physician provides health care services in-person or by telemedicine.

Governing Florida Rule 64B8-9.0141, Standards for Telemedicine Practice, can be found in its entirety at [Florida Standards for Telemedicine Practice](#).



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## *Meet Our Providers*

### **David Berger, MD, FAAP**

Dr. David Berger (“Dr. David”), a Board Certified Pediatrician with over 20 years of experience as a clinician, has developed a national reputation in wholistic pediatric primary care. Dr. David is considered Tampa Bay area’s leading authority on medical cannabis for adults and children and is one of the nation’s most experienced pediatricians using medical cannabis to help facilitate the treatment of children with chronic conditions.



Dr. David graduated from The Medical College of Pennsylvania in 1994 and completed his pediatric residency at the University of South Florida/Tampa General Hospital where he first began utilizing wholistic therapies. Dr. David has been in private practice since 1997 and in 2005 opened Wholistic Pediatrics & Family Care, his medical practice in Tampa, Florida. In 2010, Dr. David was appointed Assistant Professor at the University of South Florida College of Nursing. In 2016, he launched Wholistic ReLeaf to help qualified patients become certified to use medical cannabis.



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## **Tanya Gold, MD**

Dr. Tanya Gold is board certified in Family Medicine and Holistic Medicine and has practiced medicine for over 14 years. She received her medical degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and her residency program was completed at the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston. She is a certified neuro-linguistic practitioner, registered yoga teacher and certified Laughter Yoga Leader, and certified Laughter Leader. For fun, she enjoys traveling with her husband and playing with her 2 vocal kitties Bella and Prince. She is a public speaker and published author, and freely admits her addiction to health food stores!





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### **Kalman Pila, MD**

Dr. Kalman Pila is a board certified family physician who has practiced medicine in Tampa for over 36 years. He graduated from the University of Minnesota medical school in 1980 and completed his residency at the University of Minnesota hospitals in Minneapolis, MN. In 1985 he was appointed Assistant Professor of Medicine at USF College of Medicine and has enjoyed teaching medical students and residents in his office.

Dr. Pila and his wife Ethel have raised their kids in Tampa while enjoying all that the Bay area has to offer. They enjoy sporting events and being outside, and he plays golf frequently. Dr. Pila is an avid collector of sports memorabilia and books. He has been interested in the benefits of medical cannabis



for the past 5 years and feels that it offers an excellent form of treatment for many people.