

## Is CBD Effective for Treating Animals?

by Elana Vollen

People often ask Synergy Wellness about using medical cannabis with their pets. As it turns out, the use of cannabis for animals is nothing new. Cannabis has been used in veterinary medicine for nearly as long as hummus have used it to treat common health issues. Thousands of years ago ancient Greeks used cannabis to treat horses for colic, inflammation and even battle wounds. In the past few years, veterinarians have re-discovered the benefits of cannabis to treat many of the medical conditions in pets as we have seen in humans, to include pain, inflammation, arthritis, cancer, seizures, anxiety and digestive disorders.

In addition to their smaller size, dogs have a higher number of endocannabinoid receptors in their cerebellum than humans. These parts of the brain control coordination, heart rate, respiratory rate and more. Because of the extreme sensitivity of small animals to THC, high-CBD products with little or no THC are frequently favored, to add a margin of safety. Adverse reactions, can present as extreme sedation; while not usually fatal can require medical support.

We often hear pet owners say that it puts a spring back in the step of their arthritic pets, calms them down if they are anxious, and helps lessen the incidence of seizures, sometimes eradicating them completely! According to the American Kennel Club's Chief Veterinary Officer, Dr. Jerry Klein, CBD is used because of its anti-inflammatory properties, cardiac benefits, anti-nausea effects, appetite stimulation, anti-anxiety impact, and for possible anti-cancer benefits, although there's no conclusive data on this use.

### How much should I give my pet?

As with humans, every individual is unique, having different sensitivities and conditions. We always recommend beginning with a **low dose**, 3 drops (roughly 1.1 mg CBD) per 10 lbs. of body weight every 6 - 8 hours. A **medium dose** of 6 drops (roughly 2.2 mg CBD) per 10 lbs. of body weight every 6 - 8 hours. A **higher dose** of 16 drops (roughly 6 mg CBD) per 10 lbs. of body weight every 6 - 8 hours is considered a reasonably safe maximum dose, should symptoms not abate at lower dosages. Our recommendation is to BEGIN AT THE LOW DOSE. Observe your pet and watch for improvement. If improvement continues, remain at

this dose. Otherwise, using titration, gradually increase the dose every two days, until you notice improvement or reach the higher dose.

### **Possible Side Effects of CBD in Dogs**

While there's no scientific data on the side effects of CBD usage for dogs, below possible side effects occasionally observed:

**Dry mouth:** Research has shown that CBD can decrease the production of saliva. For dogs, this would manifest as an increased thirst.

**Lowered blood pressure:** High doses of CBD have been known to cause a temporary drop in blood pressure. Even though the drop is small, it might create a brief feeling of lightheadedness.

**Drowsiness:** Dog owners have used CBD to treat anxiety. The calming effect of CBD can also cause slight drowsiness, especially when using higher doses.

### **How do I administer the CBD oil to my pets?**

My dog will generally lick it right off my hand since it is oil and usually appeals to animals. If that doesn't work, you can drop it on a doggy or kitty treat or add it to a dollop of bacon grease or butter and they will generally lap it up! A syringe is also an option. You can get fairly accurate with a 1 ml. Syringe (we are happy to send you one if you need!)

### **Which Product should I give to my pet?**

There are many products out there geared specifically to pets. Mostly they just use a meat flavoring to make it more appealing to animals. They also tend to be more expensive per milliliter of CBD.

In general any oil-based CBD product 20:1 or 24:1 (CBD:THC) will work. Because our olive oil-based [Item #100](#) is specifically grown and manufactured for its high CBD / low THC levels of 24:1 (CBD:THC) we highly recommend this as a good place to begin.

For a more in-depth discussion of using CBD with pets, please review [CBD: A Patient's Guide to Medicinal Cannabis](#) by Leonard Leinow and Juliana Birnbaum Part III "Veterinary CBD" by Dr. Gary Richter, DVM