

# 38% of surveyed Danish dog owners put their dogs on unlicensed cannabinoids

January 31 2024

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Dog owners share their insights on using cannabinoid treatment for their pet dogs with researchers. Credit: Pernille Holst, CC-BY 4.0 ([creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/))

In a new study, 38% of dog owners surveyed in Denmark reported giving their pups cannabinoids, particularly cannabidiol or CBD. Pernille Holst

and colleagues at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark present these findings in the open-access journal *PLOS ONE* on January 31.

Cannabis has become popular for recreational and [medical use](#) in humans, and many [cannabis](#)-based products are also available for pets. But because cannabis is not legal for veterinary use in countries such as Denmark, pet owners are using it without a prescription.

To understand how common unlicensed cannabinoid use for pets is in Denmark, Holst and colleagues distributed an anonymous survey on [social media](#). Dog owners self-reported whether they used cannabinoids for their pets, what types they used and for what purpose, and whether the pet owners felt the drugs were effective.

Of the 2,002 owners who completed the survey, 752 (38%) reported using at least one cannabinoid product for their pet. Among the dog owners who gave their dogs cannabinoids, 93% used CBD drops or oils, and 9% used CBD ointments or creams. Only 4% of owners reported using products containing THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol).

Pet owners most often reported using the drugs for their dogs' pain, behavioral issues and allergies, though they also reported using cannabinoids for their animal's well-being, cancer, seizures, appetite or other conditions. Of the respondents, 77% believed they saw at least 'some' positive effect of the drugs in their dogs.

The research establishes that despite their unlicensed state, some Danish dog owners do use cannabinoids in dogs, and that most who do believe it has a positive effect on their dogs' mental or [physical health](#). However, the authors note that these findings are not supported by current studies investigating behavioral modification in dogs after CBD treatment, and that placebo effects potentially exist in the owners' evaluations. While the results are self-reported, they emphasize the need for more evidence-

based studies of cannabinoid use in pets.

The authors add, "One of the findings that surprised us was the diverse range of medical and behavioral conditions in their dogs for which Danish [dog owners](#) utilized cannabinoid products and how well the owners perceived the effect of the treatment. This suggests that systematic clinical studies are warranted within [cannabinoid](#) use in pet dogs."

**More information:** Danish dog owners' use and the perceived effect of unlicensed cannabis products in dogs, *PLoS ONE* (2024). [DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0296698](#)

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Citation: 38% of surveyed Danish dog owners put their dogs on unlicensed cannabinoids (2024, January 31) retrieved 28 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2024-01-surveyed-danish-dog-owners-dogs.html>

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