

# Keep pot away from pets

8 February 2018, by Jeanette Neufeld



Dr. Kevin Cosford, a specialist in small animal medicine at the WCVM Veterinary Medical Centre. Credit: Christina Weese

If you suspect your pet has ingested marijuana, whether in the form of an "edible" or the plant itself, it's important to be upfront with your veterinarian about what has happened.

This will allow them to avoid more extensive—and expensive—tests and treatments that are unnecessary once they know what's causing the clinical signs.

"Disclosing means less money is spent ... and the appropriate care can be given," said Dr. Kevin Cosford, a board-certified specialist in small animal internal medicine at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVM).

According to the Saskatchewan Veterinary Medical Association, the organization that regulates the province's veterinarians, a client telling their [veterinarian](#) a pet has been poisoned by marijuana would not be sufficient reason to report the client to the police.

"Our goal is to take care of the pet," said Cosford.

It's also important to disclose what happened because the signs of marijuana toxicity can mimic other conditions, such as when a pet ingests antifreeze ([ethylene glycol](#)). Both issues cause the pet to appear drunk, stumbling and unco-ordinated.

"We need to know the difference because they are treated very differently," said Cosford.

As the Canadian government moves toward legalizing marijuana for recreational use and human doctors prescribe it for medicinal use, veterinarians are seeing an upswing in marijuana-related cases.

"I would say that we probably see one to two suspected cases a week here now, whereas before it was kind of a rarity. It was, 'Oh, the dog got into the marijuana,' and everybody came to see what a dog that consumed [marijuana](#) looked like. Now we see them all the time. It has become common," said Cosford.

Provided by University of Saskatchewan

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