



Medical Marijuana and Cannabidiol Guidelines

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Veterinarians have contacted the College of Veterinarians of British Columbia (CVBC) to inquire whether they may prescribe medical marijuana and cannabidiol (CBD) to an animal. The question usually arises in one of two ways: an animal owner inquiring of a veterinarian, or a medical marijuana dispensary seeking authorization from a veterinarian.

Veterinarians may advise their clients that:

1. There is no current legal pathway for veterinarians in BC to prescribe medical marijuana to animals as the federal government legislation Access to Cannabis for Medical Purposes Regulations does not apply to veterinarians or to animals. The Regulations pertain to human health care and access for human patients only.¹
2. There are currently no cannabidiol (CBD) products approved by Health Canada and therefore no legal pathway to obtain these products. The National Compliance Section, Office of Controlled Substances, Healthy Environments and Consumer Safety Branch of Health Canada has advised that cannabis (marijuana) and cannabidiol (CBD) are Schedule II drugs under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, and that there are currently no approved CBD products for animals, meaning there is no legal pathway to obtain these products for animals in Canada. It is not enough that CBD oil or related products may be offered through a licensed supplier in Canada – the supplier must also be supplying a CBD product that is approved by Health Canada.

Health Canada can be contacted for additional information on cannabis or CBD products, or on the approval process for products for animals. For more information, contact the Veterinary Drugs Directorate at Health Canada (<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/contact/dhp-mps/hpfb-dgpsa/vdd-dmv-eng.php>).

Similar information is provided to veterinarians in Ontario by the College of Veterinarians of Ontario (CVO) in the CVO e-update entitled Update on Medical Marijuana available at: <https://cvo.org/About-CVO/News/Inquiries-concerning-prescribing-medical-marijuana.aspx>

¹ In 2014, the CVBC's College Matters Newsletter had provided registrants with communication from Health Canada that The Emergency Drug Release Program that the Veterinary Drugs Directorate administers does not permit access to medical marijuana for animals.