

Pot for Pets?

PET OWNERS ARE FINDING CBD HELPS THEIR ANIMALS COPE

BY CAMILLA MORTENSEN

My dog Rhoda turned 13 this year, and it became more and more apparent that her arthritic hocks (her hind knees) were slowing her down. I didn't like the idea of starting my frosted-face pup on Rimadyl or some other anti-inflammatory drug that could hurt her liver, but neither did I want my aging boxer/pitbull/who-knows-what rescue dog to be uncomfortable.

"Try weed," someone with a similarly aging mutt told me. "It made a huge difference for my dog."

When I contemplate weed and pets, I think of the time my friend's neighbors threw a bad batch of pot-infused butter in her trash. Her dogs got hold of it and became very, very sick.

Dr. Doreen Hock, of Pacifica Veterinary Services and The Healthy Pet, says that's not an unusual association. In her seven years working at the local emergency vet hospital, she saw dogs that had gotten into pot brownies come in sick and vomiting, having to be put on IV fluids.

The difference, she says, is that cannabis for pets is made from hemp and only has CBD (cannabidiol) in it, not the THC that caused the adverse symptoms in the animals she treated. And unlike weed, if any of the animals taking CBD have gotten sick or experienced an overdose, Hock, a holistic veterinarian, says she hasn't seen it.

I purchased a bag of Canna-Biscuits for Rhoda and started her on the treats. As a bonus, the CBD treats are said to be good for anxiety — Rho has always been a worrier. Hock says she's seen the demeanor of older pets change. Her own dog, having grown anxious due to age-related changes like hearing loss, became less stressed. And her 20-year-old cat — "we thought she was dying" — improved after starting on CBD.

Seattle-based Canna-Pets, the maker of Canna-Biscuits, says on its website that its products "are not 'pot for pets' since it is not 'medical marijuana,' or 'medical cannabis.'" And also the FDA prohibits the company "from discussing any diseases or medical conditions in conjunction with our products."



CANNA-BISCUITS

Here in Oregon, CBD pet supplements are taking off. FlowerChild in Southwest Oregon makes CBD oil for pets, Gemm Farms near Portland sells Zoe's Be Calm Hardtack Biscuits for dogs, and Moe's Meats, which sells Columbia River Natural Pet Food, has branched out into CBD pet products.

It is not legal in Oregon to put marijuana in cat or dog food, according to Stephanie Page, director of the Oregon Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Animal Health program. But if we are specifically talking about CBD derived from hemp, it is legal in vegetarian food or treats.

Page says wholesale pet food containing meat can't use hemp because it needs to be continuously inspected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. And "as far as they are concerned, CBD is an adulterant."

CBD is legal in Oregon, and hemp is grown legally in the state under a provision in the 2014 Farm Bill allowing state departments of agriculture and universities to conduct

research on the crop; additionally, the crop was made legal in 2009 by the Oregon Legislature.

There is talk that national legislation to remove hemp from the Controlled Substances Act will appear in this year's Farm Bill.

Page says ODA recently discussed hemp in pet products and has now started to register manufacturers that make health claims or products likely to be sold in the remedies section. ODA would not go out and inspect the production, but "we expect them to register," she says.

Glenn Kolb, executive director of the Oregon Veterinary Medical Association, says that when it comes to marijuana, practitioners who are interested in the drug as a potential adjunct treatment for their patients "would welcome the federal government to ease their restriction on research on this issue."

He adds that while marijuana is illegal for vets to prescribe, "laws on making hemp recommendations for veterinarians are unclear." And, Kolb notes, "In a recent statement, the Food and Drug Administration noted that that CBD products for pets are considered an unapproved drug."

In late July, delegates of the American Veterinary Medical Association asked the group's board "to consider pushing the federal government to reclassify cannabis as a way to facilitate research to understand its medical and therapeutic uses," according to the Veterinary Information News Service.

"The pharmacology and physiology of marijuana products is evolving when it comes to animals," Kolb tells *EW* in an email, "but the science behind it is lacking and incomplete. We are unaware of any known scientifically proven therapeutic uses for cannabinoids in pets."

Meanwhile Hock has seen CBD products work for seizures and help animals live with cancer.

The Healthy Pet in Eugene carries biscuits, tinctures, an oil spray, capsules and a flavored powder. "This stuff flies off our shelves," she says. "We can't keep it in stock, people are catching on. It's an incredible untapped resource."

While Rhoda isn't sure about the science either, my finicky pup does think her Canna-Biscuits are a tasty snack, and we will see how they work on her knees.

OPEN NOW!
FREE PARKING!

TOPICALS
\$5 GRAMS*

4 GRAM 1/8THS
PREMIUM FLOWER
CONCENTRATES
TOP SHELF
EDIBLES

**10% OFF
ECLIPSE PACKS**

*Price excludes tax

Join us
for the epic
GRAND OPENING of...

SPACEBUDS
—THE DISPENSARY—

AUGUST 17TH - 21ST
Free BBQ Friday thru Sunday 4 - 6pm
741 Lincoln Street, Eugene OR, 97401
Located right behind the WOW Hall!

COSPLAY CONTEST!
HUGE DEALS!

A TOTAL
SOLAR ECLIPSE
CELEBRATION
AT THE GREATEST
SCI-FI/FANTASY
THEMED DISPENSARY
IN THE GALAXY!

Do not operate a vehicle or machinery under the influence of this drug For use only by adults twenty-one years of age and older Keep out reach of children