# Marijuana Toxicity in Dogs and Cats

*Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff*

Toxin
Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC)

Source
Hashish, marijuana, and hemp, *Cannabis*.

General Information
Pets are more commonly poisoned from marijuana through ingestion other than inhalation. THC is the toxin that causes the symptoms and is absorbed quickly after ingestion. THC has strong antiemetic effects which make it difficult to successfully induce vomiting to remove the toxin from the pet. Most animals will recover, but it may take 1-3 days.

Toxic Dose
Depends on the concentration of THC and the form of marijuana ingested.

Signs
Ataxia, dilated pupils, 'glazed' eyes, drop in body temperature, increase or decrease in heart rate, bizarre behavior, hyperesthesia, disorientation, somnolence, depression (may last 18-36 hours), coma, excitation is seen occasionally, drooling, tremors, respiratory depression, or death.

Immediate Action
Induce vomiting. Seek veterinary attention.

Veterinary Care
General treatment: The induction of vomiting may be continued, gastric lavage is performed, and activated charcoal is administered.

Supportive treatment: The temperature, pulse, and respiration are monitored and different medications are given depending upon the signs present. A safe environment should be provided where the pet cannot hurt itself or others while disorientated.

Specific treatment: Unavailable. To confirm the diagnosis, urine levels of THC can be determined in the laboratory.

Prognosis
Fair



Keep this and all other medications out of the reach of children and pets.

If you think your pet has been poisoned...

Contact your veterinarian or one of the Animal Poison Hotlines (listed below) if you think your pet may have accidentally received or been given an overdose of the medication.

**ASPCA National Animal Poison Control Center

1-888-4ANI-HELP (1-888-426-4435). $65.00 per case, billed to caller's credit card.

Follow-up calls can be made for no additional charge by dialing 888-299-2973.

There is no charge when the call involves a product covered by the Animal Product Safety Service.

**Pet Poison Helpline - 24-hour service available throughout North America for pet owners and veterinary professionals who require assistance with treating a potentially poisoned pet.

1-800-213-6680 ($35.00 per incident). Staffed 24-hours a day.

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