

# DEAR MAX



**Dear Max: My family leaves me in car when it is very cold outside. Is that ok?**

No, when the temperature drops below freezing the car can act like a refrigerator and cause your dog to freeze to death. If you must bring your dog with you in the car bring lots of heavy blankets for them to burry into and consider putting a jacket on them.

**Dear Max: Can I have a little bit of chocolate baking during the holiday season?**

No! While you may like the taste of chocolate even small quantities can make a dog quite ill! Chocolate contains theobromine which is a stimulant similar to caffeine that can cause vomiting, increased heart rate, agitation and possibly seizures in dogs.

**Dear Max: Do I have to have the rabies vaccine? I don't want to.**

Yes! In Ontario a dog must be vaccinated for rabies after the age of three months and every year thereafter (depending on the use of 1 or 3 years rabies vaccine chosen). You can be fined otherwise. Rabies can easily be transmitted through saliva from one mammal to another mammal and is almost always fatal.

**Dear Max: Should I have my blood work done each year? Why?**

YES! A blood test should be done as part of your dog's annual exam. This will allow a vet to learn valuable information about your dog's health. A CBC (complete blood count) and blood chemistries that analyze chemical components in the blood identify and quantify white blood cells, red blood cells and platelets in a given amount of blood. This includes analyzing the shape and condition of the cells for health and functionality. This information is helpful in learning more about your dog's immune system (white blood cells) and oxygen carrying capacity (red blood cell count). Additionally, blood tests for dogs can also identify Glucose, Proteins, Electrolytes, Cholesterol, Endocrine Levels, Digestive Enzymes, etc. Chemicals found in the blood stream can also correlate with specific organs, lab work for dogs can help determine more than just blood count. For example, if dog blood tests show a deficiency in albumin levels, then a veterinarian knows to examine a dog's liver because albumin is produced in the liver.

**Dear Max: What does the Cannabis Act mean for my dog?**

With the Cannabis Act in effect since October 17<sup>th</sup>, the likelihood of your pet becoming exposed to cannabis (aka marijuana) will increase as it becomes more widely available. Studies completed decades ago demonstrated that dogs are more sensitive than humans to THC, the well-known psychoactive compound in

cannabis. THC levels are highest in recreational cannabis, meanwhile medical cannabis contains lower levels of THC and higher levels of CBD. The safety and efficacy of these products in pets is unknown. It is easy for pets to accidentally ingest cannabis, especially if they are in edible form. Excessive intake in dogs can easily result in signs of toxicity. Smaller dogs are particularly susceptible due to the lower levels that are needed to produce symptoms. Cats are much more selective in their food intake and are less likely to table or counter surf, eat garbage, and scavenge cigarette-type butts on walks. They also lack a sweet tooth, so they are not seen ingesting edible products as much as dogs. Christina Miu / Doctor of Veterinary Medicine /Oakville Animal Clinic

**Dear Max: What are the signs of cannabis toxicity?**

Signs of cannabis toxicity in pets include: lack of balance and coordination, vomiting, dilated pupils, prolonged depression, hyper salivation, sleepiness or excitation, low blood pressure, low body temperature, seizure, coma, and in rare cases, death. If you do see any of these signs please take your pet to a veterinary hospital immediately!

While the most common cause of THC toxicity is accidental oral ingestion, all pets are at risk of respiratory irritation from second-hand smoke. Pet owners are encouraged to smoke cannabis (and cigarettes!) outdoors or away from their pets. Christina Miu / Doctor of Veterinary Medicine /Oakville Animal Clinic

**Dear Max: Is CBD oil available for my dog?**

According to Health Canada, there are currently no approved CBD products for animals, meaning there is no legal pathway to obtain these products for animals in Canada. Currently, veterinarians are not legally allowed to

prescribe or recommend any cannabis products to pets.

**Dear Max: I want to switch over to a new brand of food. Do you have any suggestions for how quickly this can be done so that I avoid an upset belly?**

Slowly is the answer. Do not rush this transition. Watching the stool for signs of success is important. Make the switch over to new food gradually as this will help avoid digestive upset or tummy trouble. To transition, mix your current food with your new food over 7 days, gradually decrease the amount of your current dog food while increasing the amount of your new dog food. Again it is important to watch the stool to make sure the new food is being processed effectively.

**Dear Max: The holidays are coming and I am wondering what I can do to keep my pets safe.**

Great question! Here are a few things to watch out for this holiday season: Christmas trees, holly, mistletoe, tinsel, wires and ornaments. These beautiful decorations can be toxic if ingested. Make sure to keep them out of reach to keep your dog safe!



Are you ready to help some lovely Labs? If so we are ready for you.

Currently Lab Rescue is looking to add passionate, friendly volunteers to their rescue team.

*Positions required:*

**Graphics Artist:** Posters, brochures, magazine contributions, web site design ad additions.

**Drivers (Transport):** Are you willing to pick up or drop off a Lab in need? We are willing to work with your schedule as best we can. Please email your desire to help and a general boundary limit.

**Labrapalooza Assistant Coordinator:** Are you good at organizing and reaching out to people to get the plan in motion? We are looking for an energetic, fun volunteer ready to help full-fill the vision of this being our biggest and best Party ever!

**Photographer:** We are looking for a professional to take portraits at our annual event as well as take candid photos on the day. If you are willing to donate your time please email us today.

**Adoption Interviewer:** If you like to chat and share our philosophy on proper dog ownership then you are perfect for the first line of adopting and that is the interview.

For the above positions please email:

[Volunteer@lab-rescue.ca](mailto:Volunteer@lab-rescue.ca)

**Thank you to all those volunteers that have dedicated so much personal time, energy and passion for this amazing cause.**