

# Marijuana in Pregnancy and Breastfeeding

## *Facts about marijuana*

The potency of marijuana has more than tripled in the past few decades  
Marijuana crosses the placenta easily and is absorbed by the fetus  
Marijuana is stored in fat and stays in the human body for weeks after use

## *Effects on the growing fetus*

- Mothers who use marijuana may be at increased risk for:
  - Preterm delivery
  - Poor fetal growth/low birth weight
  - Placental abruption (bleeding or detachment of the placenta)
- Babies exposed to marijuana before birth are at risk for:
  - Short-term memory and verbal reasoning problems
  - Inattention, impulsivity and hyperactivity (ADD/ADHD symptoms)
  - Depression and substance use disorders later in life
- Even medical marijuana is not recommended for pregnant or breastfeeding mothers

## *Effects on the baby after birth*

- Marijuana is excreted in breastmilk, possibly at even higher levels than in the mother's blood
- Mothers can excrete marijuana in their breastmilk for up to 6 weeks after using
- Babies exposed to marijuana through breastmilk may be at risk for:
  - Short-term memory and verbal reasoning deficits
  - Inattention, impulsivity and hyperactivity
  - Depression and substance use disorders later in life
- Parents who use marijuana may be:
  - less able to respond to their babies' cues
  - unable to take care of their babies safely
- Babies who are around marijuana smoke (secondhand smoke) are also at risk

## *What to do if you are currently using*

- Make a plan to cut down or stop using altogether
- Ask your doctor about alternative treatment options that are safe for your baby
- Avoid secondhand marijuana smoke
- Talk to your partner (or other caregivers) about their use as well

For more information visit: Marijuana Use During Pregnancy & Breastfeeding FAQs <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/prenatal/Pages/Marijuana-Use-During-Pregnancy-Breastfeeding.aspx>

Marijuana and Pregnancy <https://www.acog.org/Patients/FAQs/Marijuana-and-Pregnancy>

What you Need to Know about Marijuana Use and Pregnancy <https://www.cdc.gov/marijuana/factsheets/pregnancy.htm>