

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)
- 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>