

Pregnancy, Breastfeeding, and Marijuana Don't Mix



The American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ACOG) recommends women do not use marijuana while trying to get pregnant, during pregnancy or while breastfeeding.

There is no known safe amount of marijuana during pregnancy

Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the chemical in marijuana that makes you feel “high”, passed from the mother to the unborn child through the placenta. The unborn child is exposed to THC used by the mother.

Using marijuana while you're pregnant passes THC to your baby

Use of marijuana is associated with negative effects on exposed children, not matter when it is used during pregnancy. These negative effects include decreased ability in school, mental and thinking functions as well as the ability to pay attention. These effects may not appear until adolescence.

Some people think that using a vape pen or eating marijuana is safer than smoking marijuana

Smoking marijuana has the added risk to the mother and baby of harmful smoke exposure. However, using marijuana in edible or vaporized form still exposes the baby to THC. The safety of vaporizing marijuana (or tobacco) is unknown, but marijuana in any form may be harmful.

THC in marijuana get into breast milk and may affect your baby

Any THC consumed or inhaled by the mother enters her breast milk and can be passed from the mother's milk to her baby, potentially affecting the baby. THC is stored in the body in fat. A baby's brain and body are primarily made up of fat. Breast milk also has a high concentration of fat, with some studies suggesting an eight-times higher concentration in milk. Because THC is stored in fat, it remains in the body for a long time and is found in breast milk.

Marijuana should not be used while breastfeeding

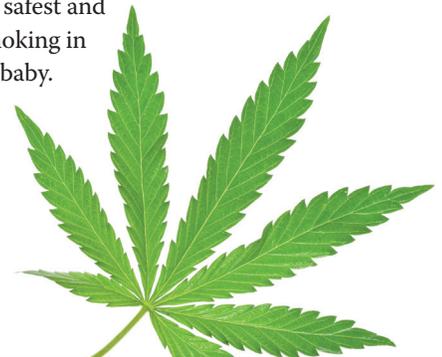
Because of the potential risks to the baby, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) states that marijuana should not be used while breastfeeding. At this time, there is limited research on breastfeeding and marijuana use, including the amount of THC in breast milk, the length of time THC remains in breast milk and effects on the infant.

“Pumping and dumping” breast milk does not eliminate the risk of marijuana use

Because THC is stored in body fat, it stays in your body for a long time. This means “pumping and dumping” your breast milk will not work the same way it does with alcohol. Alcohol is not stored in fat so it leaves the body faster. It is unknown how long after any use of marijuana that it is safe to breastfeed or how long THC remains in breast milk after occasional marijuana use as compared to regular use. Even though alcohol leaves the body faster, there is still no level of alcohol in breast milk that is considered safe for a baby either.

Being high while caring for a baby is not safe

Do not let anyone who is high take care of your baby. It is not safe for your baby to sleep with you, especially if you are high. Secondhand smoke is also not safe for your baby. Marijuana use can affect a person's ability to care for a baby. It is appropriate to ask about marijuana or other substance use before letting another person care for your baby. Secondhand smoke from marijuana has many of the same cancer-causing chemicals as smoke from tobacco. A smoke-free environment is safest and healthiest. Do not allow smoking in your home or around your baby.



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