



COUNTY / CITY
NAME / LOGO

Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women and Cannabis

Consuming cannabis (marijuana, weed, pot, etc.) can affect the health of your baby and is not recommended for women who are pregnant or breastfeeding, or who plan to become pregnant soon. Here are some important facts you should know.

Cannabis Can Harm Your Baby

- Research shows that if you use cannabis while you are pregnant or breastfeeding:
 - Your baby may be born with a lower birth weight.^{1,2}
 - A low birth weight baby is more likely to have health problems, especially in the first year of life.³
 - The growth and development of your baby's brain can be harmed.^{4,5}

How Cannabis Affects Your Baby

- No matter how you use cannabis (smoking, vaping, eating, or drinking), the active ingredient in cannabis, THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), will reach your baby in three ways:
 - Through your bloodstream and into the placenta (the organ that feeds your baby during pregnancy).^{6,7}
 - Through your breast milk.^{8,9}

“Pumping and Dumping” doesn't work. THC is stored in fat cells and is slowly released over several weeks, so it stays in your breast milk.¹⁰
 - Through secondhand smoke that enters your baby's lungs.^{11,12}



No Amount of Cannabis is Safe

- Leading doctors' organizations such as the American College of Obstetricians¹³ and Gynecologists and the American Academy of Pediatrics¹⁴ recommend that:

- If you are pregnant or thinking about becoming pregnant soon, discontinue use of cannabis.
- If you already use cannabis for medicinal purposes, discontinue use in favor of an alternative treatment which research shows is safer during pregnancy.
- Don't breathe cannabis smoke if you are pregnant. It is bad both for you and your baby because, like tobacco smoke, it lowers your oxygen levels, introduces toxins into your system and harms your lungs.^{15,16}
- Talk to your doctor about any questions you have about cannabis.¹⁷



 **LET'S TALK CANNABIS**

 <http://bit.do/letstalkcannabis>
 letstalkcannabis@cdph.ca.gov

Under California law, adults 21 or older can use, carry, and grow cannabis (marijuana, weed, pot, etc.). Buying cannabis (without a valid physician's recommendation or a county-issued medical marijuana identification card) will become legal under California law for adults 21 or older on January 1, 2018. Use of medicinal cannabis is legal under California law if you have a valid physician's recommendation or a valid county-issued medical marijuana identification card. To buy medicinal cannabis, you must be 18 or older and have either a valid physician's recommendation, a valid county-issued medical marijuana identification card, or be a Primary Caregiver as defined in Health and Safety Code Section 11362.7(d) or 11362.5(e), with a valid physician's recommendation for the patient. In addition, consistent with the Compassionate Use Act, you may possess or cultivate any amount that is reasonably related to your current medical needs. The new California law, known as the Medicinal and Adult-Use Cannabis Regulation and Safety Act¹⁸, includes information about where you can use cannabis, how much you can possess, and the penalties for illegal use. For more information, visit: https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180SB94.

References

1. Gunn, J. K., C. B. Rosales, K. E. Center, A. Nunez, S. J. Gibson, C. Christ, and J. E. Ehiri. 2016. "Prenatal exposure to cannabis and maternal and child health outcomes: a systematic review and meta-analysis." *BMJ Open* 6 (4):e009986. doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2015-009986.
2. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2017. "The Health Effects of Cannabis and Cannabinoids: The Current State of Evidence and Recommendations for Research." Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. doi: 10.17226/24625.
3. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau. "Child Health USA 2014." Rockville, Maryland: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2014.
4. Wu, C. S., C. P. Jew, and H. C. Lu. 2011. "Lasting impacts of prenatal cannabis exposure and the role of endogenous cannabinoids in the developing brain." *Future Neurol* 6 (4):459-480.
5. Leech, S. L., G. A. Richardson, L. Goldschmidt, and N. L. Day. 1999. "Prenatal substance exposure: effects on attention and impulsivity of 6-year-olds." *Neurotoxicol Teratol* 21 (2):109-18.
6. Bailey, J. R., H. C. Cunny, M. G. Paule, and W. Slikker, Jr. 1987. "Fetal disposition of delta 9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) during late pregnancy in the rhesus monkey." *Toxicol Appl Pharmacol* 90 (2):315-21.
7. Hutchings, D. E., B. R. Martin, Z. Gamagaris, N. Miller, and T. Fico. 1989. "Plasma concentrations of delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol in dams and fetuses following acute or multiple prenatal dosing in rats." *Life Sci* 44 (11):697-701.
8. Garry, A., V. Rigourd, A. Amirouche, V. Fauroux, S. Aubry, and R. Serreau. 2009. "Cannabis and breastfeeding." *J Toxicol* 2009:596149. doi: 10.1155/2009/596149.
9. Perez-Reyes, M., and M. E. Wall. 1982. "Presence of delta9-tetrahydrocannabinol in human milk." *N Engl J Med* 307 (13):819-20. doi: 10.1056/nejm198209233071311.
10. Reece-Stremtan, S., and K. A. Marinelli. 2015. "ABM clinical protocol #21: guidelines for breastfeeding and substance use or substance use disorder, revised 2015." *Breastfeed Med* 10 (3):135-41. doi: 10.1089/bfm.2015.9992.
11. Herrmann, E. S., E. J. Cone, J. M. Mitchell, G. E. Bigelow, C. LoDico, R. Flegel, and R. Vandrey. 2015. "Non-smoker exposure to secondhand cannabis smoke II: Effect of room ventilation on the physiological, subjective, and behavioral/cognitive effects." *Drug Alcohol Depend* 151:194-202. doi: 10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2015.03.019.
12. Moore, C., C. Coulter, D. Uges, J. Tuyay, S. van der Linde, A. van Leeuwen, M. Garnier, and J. Orbita, Jr. 2011. "Cannabinoids in oral fluid following passive exposure to marijuana smoke." *Forensic Sci Int* 212 (1-3):227-30. doi: 10.1016/j.forsciint.2011.06.019.
13. American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. 2015. "Committee Opinion No. 637: Marijuana Use During Pregnancy and Lactation." *Obstet Gynecol* 126 (1):234-8. doi: 10.1097/01.AOG.0000467192.89321.a6.
14. American Academy of Pediatrics. 2012. "Section on Breastfeeding: Breastfeeding and the Use of Human Milk." *Pediatrics* 129 (3):e827-e841. doi: 10.1542/peds.2011-3552.
15. Moir, D., W. S. Rickert, G. Levasseur, Y. Larose, R. Maertens, P. White, and S. Desjardins. 2008. "A comparison of mainstream and sidestream marijuana and tobacco cigarette smoke produced under two machine smoking conditions." *Chem Res Toxicol* 21 (2):494-502. doi: 10.1021/tx700275p.
16. Tashkin, D. P. 2013. "Effects of marijuana smoking on the lung." *Ann Am Thorac Soc* 10 (3):239-47. doi: 10.1513/AnnalsATS.201212-127FR.
17. Holland, C. L., D. Rubio, K. L. Rodriguez, K. L. Kraemer, N. Day, R. M. Arnold, J. A. Tarr, and J. C. Chang. 2016. "Obstetric Health Care Providers' Counseling Responses to Pregnant Patient Disclosures of Marijuana Use." *Obstet Gynecol* 127 (4):681-7. doi: 10.1097/aog.0000000000001343.
18. Senate Bill No. 94, Sess. Of 2017 (Cal. 2017) https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=20170180SB94