



## 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.<sup>1,2</sup>
  - A low birth weight baby is more likely to have health problems, especially in the first year of life.<sup>3</sup>
  - The growth and development of your baby's brain can be harmed.<sup>4,5</sup>

### 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).<sup>6,7</sup>
  - Through your breast milk.<sup>8,9</sup>

“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.<sup>10</sup>
  - Through secondhand smoke that enters your baby's lungs.<sup>11,12</sup>



### No Amount of Cannabis is Safe

- Leading doctors' organizations such as the American College of Obstetricians<sup>13</sup> and Gynecologists and the American Academy of Pediatrics<sup>14</sup> 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.<sup>15,16</sup>
- Talk to your doctor about any questions you have about cannabis.<sup>17</sup>



 **LET'S TALK CANNABIS**

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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 Act<sup>18</sup>, 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.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=201702180SB94](https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201702180SB94).

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