

THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CANNABIS, PREGNANCY AND BREASTFEEDING



Research shows that cannabis use by pregnant and breastfeeding women can negatively impact their health and that of their developing baby. Here's the most up-to-date evidence about the effects of cannabis during pregnancy and breastfeeding on you and your developing baby:



It is safest **not to use cannabis** during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

1

No matter how it is used (e.g., smoked, vaped, eaten), the developing baby may be **affected by all forms of cannabis** taken by pregnant and breastfeeding women.

3

Studies have indicated that the use of cannabis during pregnancy may be associated with increased risk for **low birth weight, preterm labour, and stillbirth**.

5

Maternal cannabis use has been linked to adverse effects on children's brain development, memory function, ability to pay attention, reasoning and problem-solving skills, and is associated with more hyperactive behaviour, an increased risk of depression or anxiety and increased risk for future substance use. Therefore, the **effects of cannabis exposure during pregnancy may last a lifetime**.

7

There is **no safe time** to consume cannabis, since the baby's brain develops throughout pregnancy.

In fact, brain development continues from infancy, through the teenage years until about age 25; cannabis can affect the brain at all stages of development.

2

Smoking cannabis may increase carbon monoxide levels in blood, which, like smoking cigarettes, can **decrease the amount of oxygen** the developing baby receives.

4

Cannabis compounds are stored in body fat and can be **passed to the baby through breastmilk**. These chemicals are slowly released over time (up to 30 days), which means that "pumping and dumping" breastmilk does not work the same way it does with alcohol. Some research reports that babies exposed to cannabis through breastmilk have slower motor development, reduced muscular tone and poor sucking.

6

Using cannabis during pregnancy may affect your DNA and genes, which can be **passed on to future generations**, impacting their health.

8

Given what we now know about the short-and long-term effects of cannabis on pregnancy, fetuses, and babies, it is safest for women to avoid using cannabis while pregnant and while breastfeeding. If you have any questions about cannabis use during pregnancy or breastfeeding, please speak to your health care provider.

