

# Cannabis, You and Your Baby

With a baby, there are so many things to think about.

This information can help you make the best choice for you and your baby.

People use cannabis and cannabis containing products for many reasons, including morning sickness/nausea, anxiety, pain relief and stress. However, much is unknown about how using cannabis during pregnancy or lactation could affect your pregnancy and your baby.

## Fast Facts



### Cannabis is not recommended to use while pregnant or lactating

Certain medications should be avoided while pregnant or lactating due to potential harm to your baby. The same is true for cannabis. All major medical organizations and the CDC strongly recommend against using cannabis during pregnancy and lactation.



### Components of cannabis can stay in the body after use and pass to your baby

Cannabis is broken down in the body. Some parts are stored in the body and can pass onto your baby during pregnancy and through human milk, both while you are using and weeks later. It is unknown if these components cause harm to your baby. Once you stop or decrease use, the levels in your body will go down over time.



### More use could cause more complications

Studies show people who use cannabis more often (at least once a week or more) during pregnancy could deliver early and may have small birth weight babies, especially if tobacco is also used. Cannabis use during pregnancy may also impact a baby's brain development.



### There is a lot that we don't know

More research is needed on the short and long term effects of cannabis use during pregnancy and lactation. It is difficult to be certain about the specific effects of cannabis on pregnancy and your developing baby, in part because much research cannot separate the effects of cannabis use from tobacco, alcohol, drugs and other social factors.

**Cannabis use:** smoking, vaping, eating, drinking, dabbing or use of creams/lotions containing cannabis (marijuana, CBD, THC, etc.). Cannabis is sometimes called many names, including marijuana, weed, pot and others.

**Lactation:** all forms of feeding a baby human milk, including expressed/pumped milk, or directly breastfeeding or chestfeeding.



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## Questions and Answers

### Is it bad to smoke marijuana around my baby?

Breathing any smoke is bad for you and your baby. Smoke has many dangerous chemicals. Do not allow anyone to smoke in your home or around your baby.

### What if I use cannabis without smoking it?

Any form of cannabis, including vaping, eating, drinking or using creams or lotions containing cannabis, may impact your baby's health in ways that are unclear at this time.

### Is it okay for me to use cannabis to help with morning sickness/nausea?

There may be other options to help with morning sickness/nausea, anxiety and stress that can be used during pregnancy and lactation. Talk to a trusted health care professional about cannabis and learn about options that may work for you.

### I want to stop or decrease my cannabis use. What should I do?

If you're having trouble quitting, there is help available. Go to [ToughasaMother.org](https://ToughasaMother.org) to learn more about support in your community.

### Is it safe to use cannabis while lactating?

Human milk has many health benefits for you and your baby. Some parts of cannabis are stored in the body, including over many weeks after use, and can get into human milk. The effect these compounds may have on your baby is unknown. To lower possible risks to your baby, continue breastfeeding while working to stop or reduce your cannabis use.

"Pumping and dumping" human milk may not be an effective strategy to reduce your baby's exposure to cannabis because the compounds are stored in the body.

### Can a hospital test for cannabis use?

Some hospitals test babies after birth for exposure to cannabis. If your baby tests positive, each hospital has different steps they may take, including limiting access to support services and possibly notifying Child Protective Services. You have a right to ask questions and get the support you need, including lactation support and other care options.

### How can I store cannabis products safely?

Store all cannabis products in their original child-resistant packaging, in a locked area where your children cannot see or reach.

### What happens if my child eats or drinks cannabis by accident?

Cannabis can make children very sick. Call the Poison Control Hotline as soon as possible, 1-800-222-1222, or call 911.

### What else should I know to keep my baby safe?

Being high or impaired while caring for a baby is not safe. Do not let anyone who is impaired or high take care of your baby. If you plan to use cannabis, make sure there is another sober adult who can safely care for your baby.

Some cannabis can make people very sleepy. It is not safe for your baby to sleep in bed with anyone who is high or impaired.

It is not safe to drive a car while high. Do not let your baby ride in a car if the driver is high.



## Resources

- Know Colorado's marijuana laws [Cannabis.Colorado.gov](https://Cannabis.Colorado.gov).
- Tough as a Mother: [ToughasaMother.org](https://ToughasaMother.org).
- Call 1-800-CHILDREN toll free to connect to statewide resources for parents with any concerns, including substance use.
- Learn how to talk to your kids about substance use at [ForwardTogetherCO.com](https://ForwardTogetherCO.com).
- Parents Thrive: [ParentsThrive.org](https://ParentsThrive.org).
- [InfantRisk.com](https://InfantRisk.com). For medication guidance call 1-806-352-2519, Monday-Friday from 7 am to 4 pm.

For more information on the research referenced in this handout, visit [Research Overview on Cannabis Use During Pregnancy and Lactation](https://ResearchOverviewonCannabisUseDuringPregnancyandLactation.com). For other cannabis information, visit [marijuanahealthinfo.colorado.gov](https://marijuanahealthinfo.colorado.gov).



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