

Marijuana and Your Baby

- **Marijuana is legal in Washington state for adults over the age of 21, but that does not mean it is safe to use during pregnancy or breastfeeding.**
- **THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) is the chemical in marijuana that makes you feel high. THC can pass through your placenta or breastmilk to your baby.**
- **Experts do not know if there is a safe amount of marijuana to use during pregnancy or breastfeeding. It is best not to use marijuana at all while you are pregnant or breastfeeding.**

Pregnancy

Marijuana crosses the placenta from your blood stream to your baby. Pregnancy is an important time for your baby's brain to grow and develop. Some studies suggest that your baby's brain and nerve development may be affected by marijuana. This might make it harder for your child to do well in school. Other studies suggest that marijuana use during pregnancy will cause your baby to be smaller or cause early delivery and time in the intensive care nursery.

Breastfeeding

- We know THC passes through breastmilk and may affect your baby. Babies exposed through breastmilk may have poor suck, poor overall feeding and slow weight gain in the first month of life.
- Because THC is stored in body fat, it stays in the body for a long time. Baby's brain cells have fat surrounding them and so can store THC for a long time. Breast milk also has a lot of fat so "pumping and dumping" may not work the same way as it does with alcohol.
- Breastfeeding is healthy for both mom and baby and provides the best nutrition for baby. If you have questions about breastfeeding, talk to your health care team.

FAQs

Is it bad for my baby to be around marijuana smoke?

Yes. Marijuana smoke has many of the same chemicals as cigarette smoke, and some of the chemicals can cause cancer. Keep your baby away from any type of smoke even if you are not the one smoking.

What if I use marijuana without smoking it?

Some people think that "vaping" and eating marijuana (edibles) is safer than smoking marijuana. While vaping and eating marijuana avoid smoke, they still contain THC which can be passed to your baby during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Marijuana is used as a medicine, so how can it harm my baby?

You cannot eat or use some foods and medicines while pregnant or breastfeeding because they might harm the baby. This includes marijuana. CBD (cannibidiol) products do not contain THC and will not make you feel high, but that does not mean they are safe to use during pregnancy or breastfeeding. Talk to your provider about safe alternatives to medical marijuana.

If you are worried about your marijuana use or ability to quit, call 866.789.1511.

Other resources: Marijuana Anonymous 800.766.6779

Washington Poison Control: 800.222.1222

SAFETY AND SELF CARE

- **Being under the influence while caring for baby is not safe.**
- **Do not let your baby ride in a car if someone is using marijuana.**
- **Make sure no one uses marijuana while taking care of your baby.**
- **Store marijuana products in a safe place.**
- **Marijuana can make you sleep hard. It is never recommended for baby to sleep with you, but especially with marijuana use.**
- **If your baby or child swallows a marijuana product, call 911 or go to an emergency room immediately.**

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