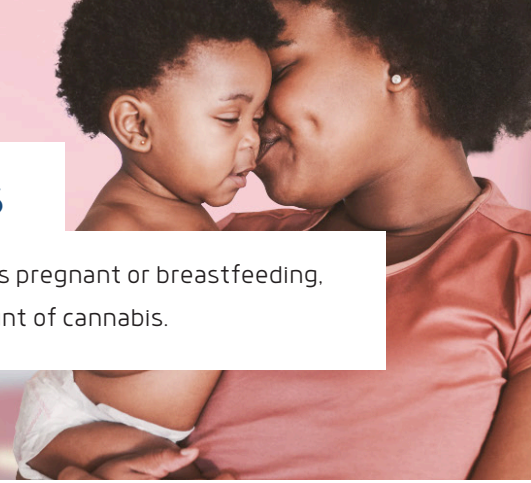




## CANNABIS AND NEW OR EXPECTING MOMS

Weed can affect a baby's health and development. Anyone who is pregnant or breastfeeding, or who plans to become pregnant soon should not use any amount of cannabis.



### WHY CANNABIS AFFECTS YOUR BABY

THC, the active ingredient in cannabis (marijuana, hashish, weed, pot, edibles, etc.), is stored in body fat. Babies' brains and bodies are made with a lot of fat.<sup>1</sup> If you use marijuana while pregnant, the THC you consume can reach your baby and affect their brain development and birth weight.

### THC CAN REACH YOUR BABY IN 2 WAYS



#### THROUGH YOUR BLOODSTREAM

- The THC stored in fat cells can attach to blood cells and reach your growing baby.<sup>2,3</sup>



#### THC IN BREAST MILK<sup>4,5</sup>

- THC is slowly released in the body over several weeks,<sup>6</sup> so it stays in your breast milk for longer than alcohol.
- For this reason, "pumping and dumping" does not work with weed.

Ask your doctor any questions you have about cannabis as a new mom.<sup>7</sup>

### CANNABIS CAN BE BAD FOR YOU AND YOUR BABY

If you are pregnant, leading doctors' organizations such as the American College of Obstetricians<sup>8</sup> and Gynecologists and the American Academy of Pediatrics<sup>9</sup> recommend that you:



#### DISCONTINUE USE OF CANNABIS

If you already use cannabis for medicinal purposes, talk to your doctor about safer alternatives for 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>9,10</sup>
- A low birth weight baby is more likely to have health problems, especially in the first year of life.<sup>11</sup>
- The growth and development of your baby's brain can be harmed,<sup>12,13</sup> causing gaps in their problem-solving skills, memory, and the ability to remain attentive.

To learn how to protect older kids from cannabis, visit [LetsTalkCannabisIL.com/Parents-and-Mentors](https://LetsTalkCannabisIL.com/Parents-and-Mentors).

If you have additional questions regarding nonmedical marijuana use in Illinois, please email [letstalkcannabisIL@prevention.org](mailto:letstalkcannabisIL@prevention.org).





## REFERENCES

1. Ryan, S. A., & Ammerman, S. D. (2018). Marijuana Use During Pregnancy and Breastfeeding: Implications for Neonatal and Childhood Outcomes. *Pediatrics*. Retrieved from <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2018/08/23/peds.2018-1889>
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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.
12. 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.
13. 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.

