

## Effects of Medical Marijuana on Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women

Marijuana use in any form during pregnancy and breastfeeding may have negative effects on a child's developing brain.<sup>1</sup> Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the compound found in all forms of marijuana mostly responsible for its psychoactive effects, has been shown to cross the placenta and enter the brain of the developing fetus during pregnancy.<sup>2</sup> The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that women who are pregnant or breastfeeding avoid marijuana use.<sup>2</sup> Pursuant to section 381.986(4)(a)4., Florida Statutes, a physician may not issue a physician certification, except for low-THC cannabis, to a patient who is pregnant.

**Speak to your qualified physician if you are or are planning to become pregnant.**

### How could marijuana use affect my baby?

- Research shows that using marijuana while you are pregnant can cause health and developmental problems in newborns including low birth weight.<sup>1</sup> Marijuana use during pregnancy or while breastfeeding may also affect your baby's brain development and result in hyperactivity, poor cognitive function, and other long-term consequences.<sup>3</sup>

### If I use marijuana, can it pass into my breastmilk?

- Yes. You may pass THC and other chemicals from marijuana to your baby through breastmilk. THC is stored in fat and is slowly released over time, meaning your baby could still be exposed even after you stop using marijuana.<sup>1</sup>

### Can secondhand marijuana smoke be harmful to my baby?

- Passive or secondhand smoke or aerosol can be as much a concern with marijuana as it is with tobacco. Studies show that people can be exposed to marijuana by inhaling it when the drug is smoked or vaporized near them. This means that if a pregnant or breastfeeding woman is exposed to marijuana smoke or aerosol, the THC can transfer to the mother's blood and the fetus or to the mother's breastmilk. Additionally, if marijuana is being smoked or vaporized around a baby or child, the THC can transfer directly into his or her blood, which may cause nasal congestion and an increased risk of cardiovascular disease.

If you are pregnant or are planning to become pregnant, you should discontinue marijuana use. If you are a qualified medical marijuana patient, speak to your physician about alternative treatment options, including low-THC cannabis.

For more information, visit [KnowTheFactsMMJ.com](https://www.knowthefactsmmj.com).

SOURCE: 1. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, 2. American Academy of Pediatrics, 3. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory: Marijuana Use and the Developing Brain