

Perinatal Cannabis Use

Increasing cannabis legalization in the United States has been accompanied by rising cannabis use among reproductive-age individuals, contributing to higher rates of use during preconception, pregnancy, and breastfeeding. At the same time, THC potency has increased more than fourfold over the past 20 years, potentially increasing the risk of adverse health outcomes for mothers and their children.

There is no known safe level of cannabis use during pregnancy, breastfeeding, or while trying to get pregnant.



Cannabis use can impair fertility in both males and females, including reduced sperm quality, ovulation disruption, decreased conception rates, and increased miscarriage risk.



Maternal risks of prenatal cannabis use include impaired judgement, lower levels of oxygen in the body, increased risk of anemia, increased cyclic vomiting and/or hyperemesis syndrome, and increased hypertensive disorders.



Prenatal cannabis exposure is linked to higher risk of serious fetal outcomes, including miscarriage, fetal growth restriction, preterm birth, and altered brain development.



Cannabis use during the perinatal period may worsen maternal depressive symptoms and negatively affect early parent–infant bonding.



Long-term effects of prenatal cannabis exposure include higher instances of sleep problems, poor self-soothing, impulsivity, hyperactivity, attention deficits, anxiety/depression, and lower academic performance.



THC is transferred into breastmilk, and infant exposure has been associated with poorer psychomotor developmental outcomes.

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