

What You Need to Know About Cannabis if Pregnant

What to know about cannabis use, possible risks, and getting support.

If you're pregnant and cannabis is a part of your life, you may be wondering what is safe for you and your baby. You may have used cannabis for stress, sleep, pain, nausea or enjoyment before, and now you may have questions about what to do next.

Here's what we know, what we don't know and how to get support.

What we know

Cannabis can pass to your baby during pregnancy.

If you use cannabis, compounds like THC and CBD can reach your baby. Research suggests cannabis use in pregnancy may affect brain development, learning, behaviour and mental health. Because of these possible risks, cannabis is not recommended for nausea, pain, anxiety, sleep or other pregnancy concerns.

Your reasons for using cannabis matter.

You may be using cannabis to manage symptoms or cope with stress. Decisions to change cannabis use are often carefully considered by pregnant people who are trying to balance their own well-being with possible risks to their baby. Support can help you find alternative strategies to manage your health concerns and reduce or stop cannabis use in a way that feels realistic.

"Pumping and dumping" does not remove cannabis from breast milk.

You may already be considering your feeding plan. If you chest/breastfeed, cannabis can pass into your milk. Cannabis can stay in your body for a long time because it is stored in fat cells. Pumping and throwing away milk after using cannabis does not remove the risk that it will be passed to your baby. If chest/breastfeeding is not an option for you, consider alternatives such as formula feeding or donor milk.

What we don't know

There is no known safe amount.

The safest choice is to avoid cannabis while pregnant and chest/breastfeeding. There's not yet enough high-quality research to know whether there is any amount of cannabis use that could be considered safe during pregnancy. If stopping feels hard, cutting back can still lower risk while you get support.



Research cannot predict exactly what will happen for every baby.

Risks may depend on lots of factors, like how much cannabis you use, how often you use it, how much THC is in the product, when you use it during pregnancy and your health history. While research is still underway, some of the risks include low birth weight, the baby being born too small or too early, and behavioural and health problems during childhood and adolescence.

What to do next

Talk to a healthcare provider.

You should expect clear, respectful, non-judgmental care. A doctor, midwife, nurse practitioner, pharmacist, counsellor, or other qualified provider can help you make a plan that supports you and your baby.

Get reliable information.

It's hard to know where to get reliable information and what sources to trust. A healthcare provider can recommend resources and provide guidance based on your specific situation. Talking about cannabis is not always easy, and you can use this resource by the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction (CCSA) for support: [Starting Healthcare Conversation: Cannabis, Pregnancy and Breastfeeding/Chestfeeding.](#)

Here are a few other credible sources to get you started:

- [Cannabis - Pregnancy Info](#)
- [Thinking about using cannabis before or during pregnancy? - Canada.ca](#)
- [Get help with substance use - Canada.ca](#)
- [Your Questions about Cannabis, Pregnancy and Breastfeeding \(CCSA\)](#)
- [Clearing the Smoke on Cannabis: Cannabis Use During Pregnancy and Breastfeeding \(CCSA\)](#)

Talk to your partner or co-parent.

It can feel like the pregnant person carries most of the responsibility for making health decisions around pregnancy. If you have a partner or co-parent, include them in the conversation. Making changes together can feel easier and help create a supportive environment for you and your baby.

Take small steps to lower risk.

If you cannot stop using cannabis right away, talk with a healthcare provider and consider:

- Using less cannabis
- Choosing products with less THC
- Using cannabis less often
- Buying only legal cannabis products
- Using formula to feed or a breast milk donor

If you use cannabis often, stopping may cause short-term withdrawal symptoms, such as trouble sleeping, irritability, anxiety or cravings. Support is available, and you do not have to do it alone.



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About CCSA

CCSA was created by Parliament to provide national leadership to address substance use in Canada. A trusted counsel, we provide national guidance to decision makers by harnessing the power of research, curating knowledge and bringing together diverse perspectives.

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