

Maternal Marijuana Use and Childhood Outcomes

Between four and five percent of pregnant women report some level of cannabis use. This level decreases markedly throughout pregnancy. Many women who report using cannabis during pregnancy do so to address symptoms of nausea/morning sickness.

Cannabis and pregnancy: Maternal child health implications during a period of drug policy liberalization, [Preventive Medicine, 2017](#) | Marijuana use in pregnancy and lactation: A review of the evidence, [American Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics & Gynecology, 2015](#) | Survey of medicinal cannabis use among childbearing women: patterns of its use in pregnancy and retroactive self-assessment of its efficacy against 'morning sickness', [Complementary Therapies In Clinical Practice, 2006](#)

Data to date is inconsistent with respect to whether *in utero* cannabis exposure is independently associated with low birthweight, pre-term birth, or other adverse neonatal outcomes (e.g., shorter gestational age)

“The aim of this study is to estimate the association between marijuana use during pregnancy and total, spontaneous and indicated preterm birth. ... Marijuana use was not associated with total preterm birth in this cohort, suggesting that among women already at high risk of preterm birth, marijuana does not increase risk further.”

[Marijuana Use during Pregnancy and Preterm Birth: A Prospective Cohort Study, American Journal of Perinatology, 2020](#)

“This is a retrospective cohort study from July 2016 to December 2018 of pregnant women who had universal drug screening of marijuana use before and after legalization of recreational marijuana in California on 1 January 2018. Maternal medical conditions and neonatal outcomes associated with usage were also evaluated. ... There were no differences in neonatal outcomes between users and non-users.”

[The impact of state legalization on rates of marijuana use in pregnancy in a universal drug screening population, The Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine, 2020](#)

“Compared with babies of mothers who had never used cannabis, infants of those who still used at 15 weeks had lower mean values for birthweight, head circumference, and gestational age at birth.”

[The deleterious effects of cannabis during pregnancy on neonatal outcomes, The Medical Journal of Australia, 2020](#)

In utero cannabis exposure is not independently associated with significant, consistent adverse effects on childhood development

“This article provides a critical review of results from longitudinal studies examining the impact of prenatal cannabis exposure on multiple domains of cognitive functioning in individuals aged 0 to 22 years. ... The current evidence does not suggest that prenatal cannabis exposure alone is associated with clinically significant cognitive functioning impairments.”

[Totality of the Evidence Suggests Prenatal Cannabis Exposure Does Not Lead to Cognitive Impairments: A Systematic and Critical Review, Frontiers in Psychology, 2020](#)