

Anyone who is pregnant or breastfeeding, or who plans to become pregnant soon should not consume cannabis (marijuana, hashish, weed, pot, etc.) as it can affect the health of your baby. Below are important facts you should know.

Cannabis Can Harm 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.^{1,2}
 - A low birth weight baby is more likely to have health problems, especially in the first year of life.³
 - The growth and development of your baby's brain can be harmed.^{4,5}

How Cannabis Affects Your Baby

- No matter how you use cannabis (smoking, vaping, consuming, or drinking), the active ingredient in cannabis, THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), will reach your baby in three ways:
 - Through your bloodstream and into the placenta (the organ that feeds your baby during pregnancy).^{6,7}
 - Through your breast milk.^{8,9} “Pumping and Dumping” doesn't work. THC is stored in fat cells and is slowly released over several weeks, so it stays in your breast milk.¹⁰
 - Through secondhand smoke that enters your baby's lungs.^{11,12}

No Amount of Cannabis is Safe

- Leading doctors' organizations such as the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists¹³ and the American Academy of Pediatrics¹⁴ recommend that:
 - If you are pregnant or thinking about becoming pregnant soon, stop using cannabis. If you need support with cannabis use cessation, please call 2-1-1 or visit www.healthvermont.gov/find-treatment to find treatment options near you.
 - If you already use cannabis for medicinal purposes, stop use in favor of an alternative treatment that research shows is safer during pregnancy.
 - Don't breathe cannabis smoke or vapor if you are pregnant. It is bad for both you and your baby because, like tobacco smoke, it lowers your oxygen levels, introduces toxins into your system, and harms your lungs.^{15,16}

Talk to your doctor about any questions you have about cannabis.¹⁷

Under Vermont law, adults 21 or older can use, carry, and grow cannabis (marijuana, weed, pot, etc.), with important restrictions. Vermont Law, known as Act No. 86 (H.511): Eliminating Penalties for Possession of Limited Amounts of Marijuana by Adults 21 or Older took effect on July 1, 2018, and includes information about where you can use cannabis, how much you can possess, and the penalties for illegal use. Adults 21 or older are also permitted to purchase cannabis if they are registered medical marijuana patients or authorized caregivers. Only medical marijuana dispensaries registered with the Department of Public Safety may sell cannabis in Vermont. For more information, visit: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/bill/status/2018/H.511>

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- ⁴ 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.
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