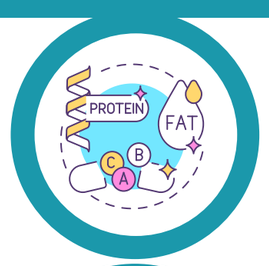
Cannabis and Breastfeeding

(marijuana, pot, weed or hash)

Using cannabis when breastfeeding is not recommended.

Using cannabis when breastfeeding can have a negative effect on you and your baby. The more cannabis you smoke when breastfeeding, the greater the potential harm to your baby. **It is safest to avoid all cannabis products when breastfeeding. If you cannot stop, try to cut down as much as possible.**



Using cannabis may reduce the amount and quality of your breastmilk



Cannabis levels in your breastmilk can be up to eight times higher than the amount in your bloodstream. This means your baby may receive significant amounts of cannabis through breastfeeding.



Cannabis can stay in breastmilk for up to 6 weeks after you stop using it. Using cannabis for a long time may lead to higher levels in breastmilk and your baby may receive higher amounts of cannabis compounds.



Using cannabis when breastfeeding can make your baby more sleepy or drowsy. This may affect their feeding, growth and development.



Using cannabis when breastfeeding can have long-term effects on your baby's brain. It might delay their development and movement, or it may affect their ability to learn, think and concentrate as they grow older.



Smoking cannabis near your baby after they are born may increase the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).



It can make you sleepy and not fully aware of what your baby is doing or what your baby needs. It can affect bonding and your relationship with your baby.

If you use cannabis when breastfeeding, or if you have recently stopped...

It is strongly recommended that you stop using cannabis. If you cannot stop, try to cut down.
You will need to watch your baby very closely. If you notice any of the following signs, contact your doctor or go to your nearest hospital immediately:

- **Unusual sleepiness or difficulty waking up to feed**
- **Poor feeding or reduced appetite**
- **Lack of weight gain**
- **Delays in movement or behaviour, such as not rolling over or crawling when expected**

You should not share a bed with your baby (co-sleeping) . You should also make sure someone who has not used cannabis or other drugs is available to take care of your child’s needs.

IMPS
Irish Medicines in Pregnancy Service

THE ROTUNDA HOSPITAL DUBLIN

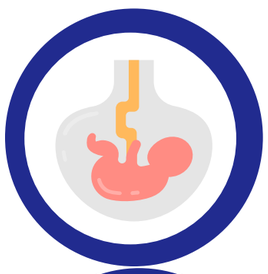
This information leaflet was developed and approved by The Rotunda Hospital. V2 Aug 2025.

Cannabis and Pregnancy

(marijuana, pot, weed or hash)

Using cannabis in pregnancy is not recommended

Using cannabis in pregnancy can have a negative effect on you, your pregnancy and your baby. The more cannabis you use in pregnancy, the greater the potential harm. The safest choice is to avoid all cannabis products when pregnant. If you cannot stop, try to cut down as much as possible.



Cannabis can cross the placenta and reach your baby. Around 1/3 of the cannabis circulating in your system can pass to your baby during pregnancy. There is no known safe level of cannabis in pregnancy.



Using cannabis in pregnancy can make you feel sick and cause severe vomiting.



Using cannabis in pregnancy can affect your mental health and motivation. It may increase stress, anxiety and depression.



Using cannabis in pregnancy can affect your baby's growth and development. Babies may be smaller, born early, or may be born with a birth defect.



Using cannabis in pregnancy can result in your baby having withdrawal symptoms including irritability, unsettled behaviour, and feeding difficulties.



Using cannabis in pregnancy can have long-term effects on your baby's brain. It may cause problems with behavour and learning as they grow older.



Using cannabis may affect how you look after your baby. It can make you sleepy and not fully aware of what your baby is doing or what your baby needs. It can affect bonding and your relationship with your baby.



Smoking cannabis near your baby after they are born may increase the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

If you use cannabis during pregnancy or after you have your baby…

- It is strongly recommended that you stop using cannabis. If you cannot stop, try to cut down.
- Tell your doctor or midwife - You may require extra monitoring.
- If you continue to use cannabis after your baby is born, you should not share a bed with your baby (co-sleeping) . You should also make sure someone who has not used cannabis or other drugs is available to take care of your child's needs.

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