

DRUG & ALCOHOL USE DURING PREGNANCY



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Substances such as marijuana, alcohol, tobacco, and prescription opiates can pass through the placenta to your baby during pregnancy. **Using these drugs while you are pregnant may cause harm to your baby.** Talk to your doctor right away if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant, and need help to stop using these— or other— substances.

KNOW THE FACTS

MARIJUANA AND PREGNANCY

The main chemical in marijuana is THC. THC that passes to your baby during pregnancy can decrease the amount of oxygen and nutrients that your baby receives, putting them at risk for low birth weight and premature birth. The THC in marijuana can also effect your baby's brain, making it hard for your child to pay attention and learn as they get older.

Marijuana smoke has many of the same chemicals as tobacco smoke— some of which can cause cancer. To keep your baby as healthy as possible, do not smoke while you are pregnant and do not allow anyone to smoke around your baby or in your home.

Marijuana use of any kind— whether smoked, vaped, or eaten— puts your baby at risk of harm.

OPIATES AND PREGNANCY

Babies that are exposed to opiates during pregnancy — like heroin, methadone, morphine, or prescription pain relievers like Vicodin— can show signs of withdrawal after birth. Some symptoms of withdrawal (or “Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome”) include sweating, frequent crying, rapid breathing, trouble sleeping, and back stiffness.

Some of the long-term effects on babies who are exposed to opiates during pregnancy include: low body size; coordination, attention, and behavior problems; and lower cognitive function. Using opiates during pregnancy may also increase your baby's risk for sudden infant death syndrome.

What if I use marijuana for medical reasons?

Talk to your doctor about the other options that are safer for your baby.

If you test positive for THC at birth, Michigan law states that Child Protective Services must be notified.

If someone in your home has a medical marijuana card, make sure that the marijuana is locked away and out of reach from children. If your child accidentally ingests marijuana, **call 911** or go to the emergency room right away.

What if I'm on a prescription opiate to manage pain?

Talk to your doctor right away about the other options that you have to manage your pain during pregnancy.

Talk to your doctor if you are pregnant or breastfeeding and need help to stop using drugs or alcohol during pregnancy.

Or call the National Parent Helpline: 1-855-4-A-PARENT
(1-855-427-2736) for help.

KNOW THE FACTS

ALCOHOL AND PREGNANCY

Alcohol use of any kind or amount during pregnancy can be harmful to your baby. Babies who are exposed to alcohol during pregnancy are at an increased risk for lifelong behavioral, physical, and intellectual disabilities known as fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASDs).

Some of the effects of FASDs include: difficulty with learning or memory, hyperactivity, difficulty with attention, speech and language delays, low IQ, poor reasoning and judgement, and heart and kidney problems. Women who drink during pregnancy are also at increased risk for miscarriage or stillbirth.

TOBACCO USE AND PREGNANCY

Tobacco smoke has more than 3,800 chemicals in it, including nicotine and carbon monoxide. The smoke can harm your baby by reducing blood flow and oxygen, as well as nutrients that help your baby grow. Babies who are exposed to tobacco during pregnancy are at greater risk for: low birth weight, premature birth, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), cleft lip or cleft palate, and breathing problems like asthma.

Smoking can also increase a baby's risk for colic, childhood obesity, hearing difficulties, problems staying focused, conduct problems, Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), and other respiratory problems.

Women who smoke during pregnancy are also at higher risk for miscarriage and problems with the placenta blocking the birth canal or detaching from the uterine wall.

REFERENCES

- The Organization of Teratology Information Specialists (OTIS): www.MotherToBaby.org
- Center for Maternal Substance Abuse and Child Development: www.emory.edu/MSACD
- American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists: www.acog.org
- Centers for Disease Control & Prevention: www.cdc.org
- Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration: www.samhsa.gov
- American Academy of Pediatrics: www.healthychildren.org



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RESOURCES THAT CAN HELP

If you are pregnant or are at risk for becoming pregnant and you currently use drugs or alcohol, there are resources that can help.

- Call **1-855-4A-PARENT (1-855-427-2736)** for **free** to connect to statewide resources for parents.
- Learn how to talk to your kids about substance use at: TalkSooner.org
- Find local recovery resources: www.mirecovery.info
- **Smoker's Quitline: 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)** or www.tobacco-cessation.org
- **Nicotine Anonymous:** www.nicotine-anonymous.org
- **Treatment Locator:** www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov or call **1-800-622-HELP (4357)**
- **Alcoholics Anonymous:** www.aa.org

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