

# Marijuana in Pregnancy and Breastfeeding:

## Start a conversation with your doctor or midwife.

Many women report using marijuana in some form during pregnancy. The chemical in marijuana that causes a “high” is called THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) and can pass to your baby through your blood and breast milk. Some people use marijuana for medical reasons, others due to addiction, choice or someone is smoking around them. No matter how you are exposed, we’d like to talk to you about it. We still need more research. For now, studies show that there may be risks if you or your baby are exposed to marijuana.

Here are a few things to consider so we can help you and your baby live a healthy life:

### Your pregnancy

The risks of using marijuana while pregnant include:

- ▶ Babies being born too early (premature)
- ▶ Babies being born too small (low birth weight or “intrauterine growth restriction”)
- ▶ Babies not being able to get enough nutrition and oxygen to be healthy (altered blood flow in placenta)

### Caring for a newborn

Using marijuana while caring for your baby can:

- ▶ Affect your ability to safely care for your baby
- ▶ Cause physical problems for your baby from secondhand smoke – including a higher risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)



### Breastfeeding

The active ingredient in marijuana (THC) can stay in breastmilk for up to 30 days and build up in your baby’s body fat over time. Some studies show that using marijuana while breastfeeding may:

- ▶ Lower your milk supply
- ▶ Cause your baby to have low muscle tone, sedation, poor sucking or delayed motor development

Now you know the risks – we want to talk to you if you are using or exposed!

#### Need help with quitting?

Call the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services at **(518) 473-3460**.

For references or more information, visit: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) and search “marijuana”