

Cannabis use during pregnancy



We're here to support you to have a healthy pregnancy and a safe start for your family. This leaflet will give you information about the risks of using cannabis while you are pregnant and where you can get help to quit.

Keeping you and your baby safe

It's safest to avoid cannabis:

- When trying to get pregnant.
- During pregnancy.
- While breastfeeding.
- While caring for children.

Risks for you

Cannabis can:

- Make mental health problems worse.
- Trigger new mental health issues, especially if you started using cannabis at a young age.
- Make problems with pain, nausea and sleep worse.



Risks for your baby

If you smoke cannabis, you breathe in a poisonous gas called carbon monoxide (CO) which reduces the amount of oxygen travelling to your baby. The active ingredient in cannabis, tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), can affect your baby's development.

Using cannabis during pregnancy can increase the chance of:

- Miscarriage, stillbirth and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).
- Your baby being born too early.
- Your baby being born with a low birthweight.
- Your child having learning, behavioural and mental health issues as they grow up.
- Your placenta coming away from the wall of the womb. This is an emergency and can be very dangerous for both you and your baby

After birth

Using cannabis can affect your ability to safely care for your baby. It can be harder to notice and respond quickly to:

- Signs of danger.
- Signs that your baby is hungry or needs comforting.

Breastfeeding

Cannabis can pass into breast milk and then transfer to your baby. THC collects in fat stores and can remain in your baby's body for several weeks. It is recommended that you stop using cannabis to protect your baby.

Need Help?

We understand that it can be hard to reach out for help, but you're not alone. It is important to be honest with your midwife and other professionals involved in your care while you are pregnant so that you can access the best care and support.

Speak to your midwife or find further information here:

- **Drug use and pregnancy**
[NHS Highland - Drug Use and Pregnancy page](#)
- **Smoking and pregnancy**
[NHS Highland - Smoking and Pregnancy page](#)
- **'With You' drug and alcohol support service**
[With You Anywhere Highland - digital support](#)
- **Highland Smoking Cessation Midwives**
Call 07824 41 7514 or 07814 071 341
[Smoke-Free Highland website](#)
- **Highland Alcohol & Drug Advice & Support Service**
01463 717 594
- **Highland Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (HADP)**
[HADP - Adult services page](#)
- **Youth Action Team**
01463 256 603 (this service is for young people under the age of 18, or age 25 if care experienced)
- **Know The Score**
0800 587 5879
[Know the Score website](#)
- **Crew**
0131 220 3404
[Crew website](#)
- **Highland Substance Awareness Toolkit**
[Highland Substance Awareness Toolkit website](#)
- **Highland Overdose Prevention and Engagement (HOPE) app**
Search 'HOPE: Highland Overdose' on the Apple and Google Play app stores.