



Do's & Don'ts

Cannabis Use: Parenting and Safety

Disclaimer: This information is intended to help and inform parents about cannabis use, the risks posed, and safety. The information provided was developed by professionals that work with adults, children, or families impacted by substance use.

DO

- ✓ Keep all cannabis stored up, away, and out of reach of your child and pets. Use a lock box or other sealed storage system. Make sure all drugs (prescribed or not) are out of your child's reach.
- ✓ Find a responsible and sober caregiver for your child if you decide to use cannabis, alcohol, or other drugs
- ✓ Change your clothes before holding your child if you have been smoking cannabis.
- ✓ Wash your hands before holding your child if you have been smoking or handling cannabis.
- ✓ Contact and talk with your doctor and/or certifying provider if you are pregnant or have a child with health needs before consuming cannabis.

DON'T

- ✗ Smoke cannabis around your child.
- ✗ Allow anyone who is under the influence of cannabis, alcohol, or other drugs to care for or supervise your child.

The medical community reports and suggests the following*:

- Always practice safe sleep guidelines.
- Let your baby sleep alone. Don't allow your baby to sleep with you.
- Place baby on his/her back to sleep.
- Keep all pillows, bumper pads, blankets and toys out of your baby's crib or bassinet.
- Cannabis use during pregnancy and while breastfeeding is not recommended.
- THC, the active chemical in cannabis, stays in breastmilk for at least six weeks after consuming cannabis.
- Breastfeeding your baby may show the effects of cannabis which may include being quiet and sleepy, having poor muscle tone and the baby nursing ineffectively at your breast.
- THC, the active chemical in cannabis, can be passed to your baby while breastfeeding and can affect the development of the brain, which may result in hyperactivity and poor cognitive function (impacting memory and learning).

Smoking cannabis impacts your caregiving ability to:

- Make decisions and pay attention.
- Respond to your baby/child's needs to be fed, comforted, and etc.
- Recognize danger.
- React quickly.
- Interact fully, as you may be withdrawn or disconnected.
- Communicate clearly with others and your child.
- Build a healthy attachment with your child.

Children exposed to cannabis and tobacco smoke have more emergency department visits and ear infections compared to children with no smoke exposure. Secondhand tobacco smoke can increase the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

If you are worried about a bad reaction to cannabis, call 911 or visit your nearest hospital if it is a medical emergency. For non-emergencies, contact the Maryland Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222. Help is available 24 hours a day. Calls are confidential.

**The American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine leading professional groups.*