

# Cannabis in pregnancy: meta-review expands on surgeon general's data

Singh S & al. BJOG 23 Sep 2019

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## Takeaway

Prenatal cannabis use is prevalent, but declines through pregnancy.

Paucity of data on quantification of cannabis exposure by gestational age, frequency, recreational prenatal cannabis use/legalization.

## Why this matters

In August 2019, the US Surgeon General issued a national warning against cannabis use during pregnancy and lactation, citing potential effects on the developing brain.

Supporting data were limited; metadata provide greater context with larger overall study/participant numbers.

Discuss potential harms of cannabis, other substances with pregnant patients.

## Key results

41 studies.

Prenatal cannabis use prevalence: 0.24% to 22.6%; especially ages <18, 18-24 years.

Cannabis use increased during the first trimester (n=1 study): from 5.7% to 12.1%, 2002-2003 to 2016-2017, respectively (difference, 6.4%; 95% CI, 2.6%-10.3%); overall data demonstrated consistent declines in second, third trimesters.

Concurrent alcohol in 7.6%-64.6% of cannabis users; concurrent illicit drug and tobacco use in 0.5%-61.5% and 27.4%-77.3%, respectively.

Neonatal outcomes:

Low birth weight (n=3/7): aOR, 1.5 (95% CI, 1.1-2.1) to 2.72 (95% CI, 1.67-4.43).

Increased ICU admissions (n=4/6): adjusted relative risk (aRR), 1.40 (95% CI, 1.36-1.44) to aOR, 2.0 (95% CI, 1.7-2.5).

Preterm birth (n=3/9): aRR, 1.41 (95% CI, 1.36-1.47) to aOR, 2.2 (95% CI, 1.9-2.5).

Small size (n=5/10): aOR, 1.30 (95% CI, 1.03-1.62) to 2.2 (95% CI, 1.8-2.7).

## **Study design**

Systematic meta-review of recreational prenatal cannabis use, health outcomes in high-income countries, 2000-2019.

Funding: Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

## **Limitations**

Limited generalizability.

Select neonatal, maternal outcomes.

Observational, residual confounding.

Singh S, Filion KB, Abenhaim HA, Eisenberg MJ. Prevalence and Outcomes of Prenatal Recreational Cannabis Use in High-Income Countries: A Scoping Review. BJOG. 2019 Sep 16 [Epub ahead of print]. doi: 10.1111/1471-0528.15946. PMID: 31529594

