



BREASTFEEDING & CANNABIS

THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

There are so many great health reasons for breastfeeding. Choosing to breastfeed is a wonderful, healthy choice that you can make for yourself and your baby. It is important to know that, although cannabis is a plant and is now legal, it is safest not to use cannabis while breastfeeding.

- THC has been found in breastmilk. Cannabis compounds are stored in body fat and can be passed to your baby through breastmilk. These chemical compounds are slowly released over time (up to 30 days), which means that 'pumping and dumping' breastmilk does not work the same way it does with alcohol.
- There is no known safe amount of cannabis use while breastfeeding. The safest approach is not to use cannabis.
- If you do choose to use cannabis while breastfeeding, reflect on how often and how much cannabis you consume. Try to use as little cannabis as possible and use it less often, choose low-potency products — those with low THC and/or high CBD content, consume cannabis outside of your house and car, use it away from your baby, and change your clothes before holding or breastfeeding your baby.
- Babies exposed to THC through breastmilk may be drowsy, have reduced muscular tone and have poor suckling, which could impact breastfeeding success and the baby getting enough breastmilk.
- Maternal cannabis use has been linked to adverse effects on children's brain development, memory function, ability to pay attention, reasoning and problem-solving skills. It is also associated with more hyperactive behaviour in children.
- Co-sleeping with your baby or infant while using cannabis is unsafe and should be avoided because you may be less alert due to the effects of cannabis. For example, a parent may be more likely to roll onto their baby and not wake up when they are under the influence of cannabis (as well as alcohol or other drugs).

For more information about cannabis and health, see www.fnha.ca/cannabis