

BUSINESS INSIDER

A new study shows what happens to babies if the mother smokes marijuana during pregnancy

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Babies exposed to marijuana in the womb are likely to be born smaller than those not exposed, and more likely to need intensive care after birth, according to a new analysis of existing evidence.

Mothers who smoke marijuana while pregnant are also more likely than those who don't to have iron-deficiency anemia, researchers report in the journal *BMJ Open*.

"We know that caring for yourself before you become pregnant is one of the best ways to make sure your baby will be born healthy," said study author Dr. Cara Christ, director of Arizona's Department of Health Services in Phoenix.

"This may include taking vitamins including folic acid, making changes to your diet, and not using tobacco, alcohol, or drugs," Christ told Reuters Health by email.

Marijuana is one of the most commonly used drugs worldwide and in North America, nearly one in eight people aged 15 to 64 years use marijuana, the researchers note.

The team reviewed results from 24 studies across the world to determine how marijuana use affected pregnant mothers and their unborn children. They looked at various health factors including how much babies weighed, their length and head size at birth, as well as how many weeks the infants were in the womb before being born.

Babies who were exposed to marijuana during pregnancy were 77 percent more likely to be born underweight, meaning they weighed less than 5.5 pounds, compared to infants whose mothers did not use marijuana.

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Entire article here: <http://goo.gl/aY9J5I>

The AMA and most major medical organizations oppose the legalization and medicalization of marijuana.



P.O. Box 876 | Tinley Park, IL 60477

708-781-9328 | ContactUs@illinoisfamily.org | www.illinoisfamily.org