



Ladies and Gentlemen,

Cannabis is a substance that many people use for various reasons. However, when it comes to pregnancy and breastfeeding, the risks far outweigh any perceived benefits. The chemicals in marijuana, particularly THC, can **pass from the mother to the baby through the placenta** during pregnancy **and through breast milk** after birth.

Research has shown that using cannabis while pregnant can lead to several complications. These include **lower birth weight, premature birth, and developmental issues for the baby**. THC can affect the baby's brain development, potentially leading to **long-term cognitive and behavioral problems**. Additionally, cannabis use during pregnancy has been linked to an increased risk of **stillbirth**.

For **breastfeeding mothers**, the dangers continue. **THC is stored in body fat and can be released slowly over time, meaning that a baby could be exposed to this harmful chemical for an extended period**. This exposure can affect the baby's brain development and lead to issues such as **poor cognitive function**.

It is often claimed by marijuana advocates that more research needs to be done. True, but **such research is impossible** in that it would require a double-blinded study of several hundred pregnant women, half of which would be given cannabis, and half not. This is quite **obviously unethical**.

It is crucial for all people to understand these risks and make informed decisions. **It is critically important that pregnant or breastfeeding women avoid using cannabis in any form—whether by smoking, vaping, edibles, or oils**.

It is important that those purchasing THC products be informed of these dangers by requiring the posting of prominent signage at each cannabis dispensary in Rhode Island, if not also on each package of THC containing product sold in RI. Since the THC content must be on each package it should be relatively easy to include this most important warning. Many other states require similar warning language. It is my urgent request and hope that the RI Assembly protect their newborn citizens from brain damage caused by these substances. Thank you. *Submitted by Dr. John Concannon*

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References:

CDC on Cannabis and Breastfeeding:

<https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding-special-circumstances/hcp/vaccine-medication-drugs/marijuana.html>

CDC on Cannabis and Pregnancy: <https://www.cdc.gov/cannabis/health-effects/pregnancy.html>