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**Marijuana, Breastfeeding, and the Use of Human Milk:
Position Statement from the National Association of Neonatal Nurses**

Chicago, IL, October 1, 2020 – Breastfeeding is the optimal feeding method and human milk the optimal source of nutrition for neonates and infants, but research addressing the impact of marijuana use during breastfeeding is limited. Additionally, the legalization of marijuana in several US states and Canadian provinces has highlighted confusion regarding safety during pregnancy and lactation. As the professional voice of neonatal nurses, the [National Association of Neonatal Nurses \(NANN\)](https://www.nann.org) recommends women abstain from marijuana consumption during pregnancy and while breastfeeding in a [new position statement](#).

Human milk and breastfeeding provide preferred nutrition for infant growth and development, but research shows that intrauterine marijuana exposure is associated with decreased birth weight and preterm birth. Emerging evidence reports neurocognitive and education deficits in children and adolescents exposed to marijuana during fetal development.

Marijuana crosses into breast milk after maternal consumption, but data on the associated risks to infants are insufficient to address the safety of marijuana consumption by women who are breastfeeding. In the organizations' new position statement, NANN provides both rationale and recommendations health care providers can use when working with mothers who use marijuana while breastfeeding.

“We know that breast milk is the optimal nutrition for all neonates and infants, but we also know that for mothers who use the drug while breastfeeding, their breast milk will contain the drug as well,” says NANN President Joan Rikli, MBA MSN RN CPNP NE-BC. “In order to reduce the risk of low birth weight, prematurity, and negative long-term neurobehavioral effects to neonates and infants, NANN recommends that lactating mothers abstain from marijuana use.” The organization’s position statement adds that mothers who choose to continue to use marijuana should be advised to significantly reduce intake and be informed of the possible adverse effects.



NANN's new position statement lists 14 recommendations for providers for addressing maternal marijuana use and the potential negative impact on neonates and infants. The [accompanying infographic](#) aims to facilitate easy sharing of recommendations and safety information on marijuana use of expecting and lactating mothers within the neonatal nursing population.

About NANN

As the professional voice and home of neonatal nurses, nurse practitioners, and clinical nurse specialists, NANN supports the advancement of the neonatal nursing profession through opportunities for neonatal nurses to influence care for neonates and their families, collaborate with leaders and peers in their field, and gain clinical knowledge to improve daily practice. NANN serves nearly 7,500 members from all over the world. Learn more at www.nann.org.

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