Cannabis and pregnancy

Cannabis has many different names and is one of the most widely used recreational drugs. It has been illegal in the UK since 1928 and has recently been re-classified as a Class B drug.

**Hash**
Black/brown lump made from resin

**Grass/weed**
Dried chopped leaves (sometimes called herbal)

**Skunk**
Modified form of herbal cannabis which is usually much stronger than other varieties

Cannabis is usually mixed with tobacco and smoked. It therefore has the same effect on pregnancy as smoking cigarettes. Cannabis contains as many cancer causing chemicals as tobacco.

**Risks to your baby**
- Poor growth in the womb
- Your baby may be underweight which can lead to breathing and feeding problems
- Increase in your baby’s heart rate
- Prematurity (being born early)
- Your baby is more likely to suffer from asthma
- Your baby is at greater risk of cot death.

**Risks to the mother**
- You are more likely to suffer from chest problems such as asthma and lung cancer
- You are at a higher risk of a stroke and heart attack
- Your fertility may be affected
- You are more likely to develop mental health problems such as anxiety and depression
- Skunk use is linked to severe mental health problems such as schizophrenia

You can breastfeed if you use cannabis, but smoking increases the risk of cot death and you need to ensure that you do not smoke around or near your baby. Your baby will also be at risk from inhaling smoke from your clothes.

Babies do sometimes show signs of withdrawal after they have been born and they may be restless, difficult to soothe and more difficult to feed.
Help and support
If you would like support to stop smoking and using cannabis the following groups may be useful:

New Road Treatment and Advice Centre
023 8071 7171

The Bridge
023 8088 1400

Options
023 8063 0219

3D
023 8022 7704

New Forest Drug Action Team
01425 483352

FRANK
0800 776600
www.talktofrank.com

Karen Pulfer
Substance misuse specialist midwife
Princess Anne Hospital
Broadlands Birth Centre
E5
023 8079 6632

If you need a translation of this document, an interpreter or a version in large print, Braille or on audio tape, please telephone 023 8079 4688 for help.