



ACOG Updates Recommendations on Marijuana During Pregnancy

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) continues to recommend that clinicians discourage pregnant and breast-feeding women from using marijuana, according to an interim update to a committee opinion.

The group notes that currently available data are insufficient to evaluate the drug's effects on infants. However, as states continue to legalize marijuana, women may mistakenly believe that it is safe for use during pregnancy and lactation. Approximately 2% to 5% of women report marijuana use during pregnancy; however, use is as high as 15% to 28% among young, urban, socioeconomically disadvantaged women. Notably, 34–60% of marijuana users continue use during pregnancy.

ACOG continues to recommend that clinicians tell women the purpose of screening for marijuana use is to facilitate treatment of substance abuse and not to punish or prosecute patients. However, in the updated recommendations, ACOG says clinicians should inform women of the potential ramifications of a positive screen result, including any mandatory reporting requirements.

Specific recommendations in the updated committee opinion include the following:

- Ask all women trying to conceive or in early pregnancy about their use of tobacco, alcohol, drugs (including marijuana), and other nonmedical use of medications.
- Counsel women who report marijuana use about potential adverse health consequences associated with continued marijuana use during pregnancy.
- Encourage pregnant women and those considering pregnancy to discontinue marijuana use.
- Encourage pregnant women and those considering pregnancy to discontinue using medicinal marijuana and use another therapy that has better pregnancy-specific data.
- Because the data are insufficient to evaluate the effects of marijuana use on infants during lactation and breast-feeding, discourage lactating and breast-feeding women from using marijuana.

The committee opinion is published online September 21, 2017, and in the October issue of *Obstetrics & Gynecology*. It updates the committee opinion of the same name published in July 2015, adding new research.

(Source: [Medscape](#), September 21, 2017)

MDAdvantage Insurance Company of New Jersey
100 Franklin Corner Road, Lawrenceville, NJ 08648-2104 ♦ www.MDAdvantageonline.com ♦ 888-355-5551

*Publisher of MDAdvisor: A Journal for the Healthcare Community
Proud sponsor of the Edward J. III Excellence in Medicine Awards® and Scholarship Fund*