

Managing cannabis use in breastfeeding women

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As more states legalize medicinal and recreational cannabis use and increasingly decriminalize cannabis, the risk to the growth and development of breastfeeding infants whose mothers use cannabis becomes a growing public health concern. The critical role that certified lactation consultants (CLCs) could play in postpartum management of cannabis use and a Call to Action to expand the role of CLCs is published in *Breastfeeding Medicine*.

The article entitled "Management of Cannabis Use in Breastfeeding Women: The Untapped Potential

of Certified Lactation Consultants" was coauthored by Kara Skelton, Ph.D. and Sara Benjamin-Neelon, Ph.D., MD, MPH RD, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (Baltimore, MD) and Kelly Young-Wolff, Ph.D., MPH, Kaiser Permanente Northern California (Oakland, CA) and University of California, San Francisco.

CLCs are specialized [healthcare professionals](#) who provide evidence-based support for the clinical management of breastfeeding. The authors encourage obstetricians and pediatricians to partner with CLCs to help identify women who are using cannabis while [breastfeeding](#) and to provide education and counseling to encourage them to suspend or at least minimize cannabis use while nursing. Data have shown that the [active ingredient](#) in cannabis is transferred to the infant via breastmilk and remains in the infant's system for about 6 days, raising concern what adverse effect it may have on the infant's long-term growth and neurodevelopment.

Arthur I. Eidelman, MD, Editor-in-Chief of *Breastfeeding Medicine*, states: "CLCs are a potential asset to the healthcare team caring for the maternal/infant dyad, and because of their intimate personal involvement with mothers they can serve as the critical professional in guiding nursing mothers on the proper use of cannabis products."

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More information: Kara R. Skelton et al, Management of Cannabis Use in Breastfeeding Women: The Untapped Potential of Certified Lactation Consultants, *Breastfeeding Medicine* (2019). [DOI: 10.1089/bfm.2019.0272](https://doi.org/10.1089/bfm.2019.0272)

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