

New study examines treatment outcomes of pregnant women with cannabis use disorder

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An estimated 4 to 7 percent of women use cannabis during pregnancy, and cannabis use disorder (CUD) among pregnant women is on the rise in the United States. Growing evidence suggests that cannabis use during

pregnancy can adversely impact the health of mothers and their children, including a higher chance of preterm birth, low birth weight, and infant death. Despite the widespread legalization of cannabis, increasing rates of CUD, and associated adverse health effects, limited research exists on treatment for this population.

A new study by Professor Panagiota (Yiota) Kitsantas found that pregnant women are more likely to complete CUD treatment if referred by the justice system, community partners, or health care providers. To the author's knowledge, this is the first study to examine treatment outcomes for CUD for pregnant women seeking treatment at facilities supported by public funds.

"A better understanding of the factors that influence treatment for CUD in pregnant women can provide valuable information for prenatal care providers. This may allow providers to refer pregnant women with CUD to additional, helpful resources and encourage them to seek sustained treatment. Developing targeted CUD treatments for pregnant populations is crucial due to increasing CUD rates, cannabis accessibility, and potency," said Kitsantas.

According to the Centers for Diseases Control, someone is diagnosed with CUD if they are unable to stop using marijuana even though it's causing health and social problems in their lives.

Additionally, the study found that only 30 percent of pregnant women completed treatment for CUD and a 4-to-12-month stay was associated with treatment completion. Employment is another factor that increased successful completion of CUD treatment.

"Treatment outcomes among [pregnant women](#) with [cannabis use disorder](#)" was published in *Addictive Behaviors*.

More information: Panagiota Kitsantas et al, Treatment outcomes among pregnant women with cannabis use disorder, *Addictive Behaviors* (2023). [DOI: 10.1016/j.addbeh.2023.107723](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.addbeh.2023.107723)

Provided by George Mason University

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