

PUBLIC EDUCATION FOCUS GROUPS ON

Alcohol, Cannabis and Pregnancy in Manitoba



Advice Received on Alcohol and Cannabis Use During Pregnancy



- Participants (pregnant or new parents) felt informed on the risks associated with alcohol use during pregnancy. However, they were less informed about the use of cannabis.
- Most participants did not receive advice from their medical practitioners about alcohol or cannabis use during pregnancy. Excellent conversations occurred when they asked their practitioners direct questions.
- Most of the advice received from their support networks (friends/family/partners) was to avoid drinking alcohol, although it was not uncommon to have been told that small amounts of alcohol are safe. None of the participants received advice about cannabis from their support networks.



Most Trusted Sources of Information

	Doctors, Nurses, Maternity/ Health Practitioners
	Websites from medical and government sources; books.
	Family/Friends
	Chat GPT
	Social Media



Education

- Most participants could not recall finding information on the risks associated with prenatal alcohol or cannabis exposure, beyond posters in bars/restaurants and at their doctor's offices.
- Many learned about risks related to alcohol in high school health class, however, did not learn about cannabis. This may be because most participants attended high school pre-legalization.

Remaining Questions Participants Have About Alcohol, Cannabis and Pregnancy

- Is there a safe period to consume (e.g., prior to knowing you are pregnant)?
- What is the impact of consumption on fertility?
- What are the risks to the baby of cannabis use during pregnancy? Do all forms of cannabis carry risks (e.g., CBD, THC, different ingestion methods)?
- Can I use cannabis while breastfeeding?
- Should I pump and dump? If so, for how long after consuming alcohol or cannabis?
- Can cannabis be used as a substitute for drinking for those who are pregnant/breastfeeding?
- What is the impact of second-hand cannabis smoke on the unborn baby?



Considerations for Public Education on Alcohol, Cannabis and Pregnancy

- Clever and humorous ads work.
- Strong, bold messaging that is non-judgmental is preferred.
- Education on "new" topics is appreciated.
- Links to more information are important – either through website or QR code.
- Image should tie into the main message.
- Focus on community and support is appealing but can overpower the message if not careful.