



Background

Marijuana, also referred to as cannabis, is used by an estimated 4.9% of pregnant women in the United States.¹ Marijuana contains compounds which include tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), which is impairing or mind-altering, as well as other active compounds, such as cannabidiol (CBD). The chemicals in marijuana (specifically THC) can pass through the mother’s system, including through the womb, bloodstream, and breastmilk.^{1,2} Using marijuana during pregnancy may affect a baby’s development and may put mothers at risk for pregnancy complications. Since research on the harm of marijuana during pregnancy is limited, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends that women who are pregnant, planning to get pregnant, or breastfeeding not use marijuana.

Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS)

PRAMS collects site-specific, population-based data on maternal attitudes and experiences before, during, and shortly after pregnancy. PRAMS surveys are typically completed 2 to 6 months after a live birth.

Marijuana Use Before During and After Pregnancy [◇]

PRAMS Indicator	Virginia 2021-2023 % (95% Confidence Interval) [†]
Marijuana use daily, 3 months before pregnancy	35.0 (24.8 – 45.3)
Marijuana use daily, while pregnant	6.8 (1.5 – 12.0)
Marijuana use, after pregnancy	7.2 (4.9 – 9.5)

[◇] Among women with a recent live birth who reported marijuana use before during and/or after birth
[†] Weighted Percentage (95% Confidence Interval)

Marijuana Use Discussion During Prenatal Healthcare Visit* [†]

PRAMS Indicator	Virginia 2021-2023 % (95% Confidence Interval) [†]
Asked About Marijuana Use	51.3 (46.9 – 55.7)
Advised Against Marijuana Use	18.7 (15.3 – 22.2)
Advised Against Marijuana Use if Breastfeeding	28.7 (24.7 – 32.7)

* Among all PRAMS survey participants; see above for
[†] Weighted Percentage (95% Confidence Interval)

Top 3 Reasons for Using Marijuana During Pregnancy [±]

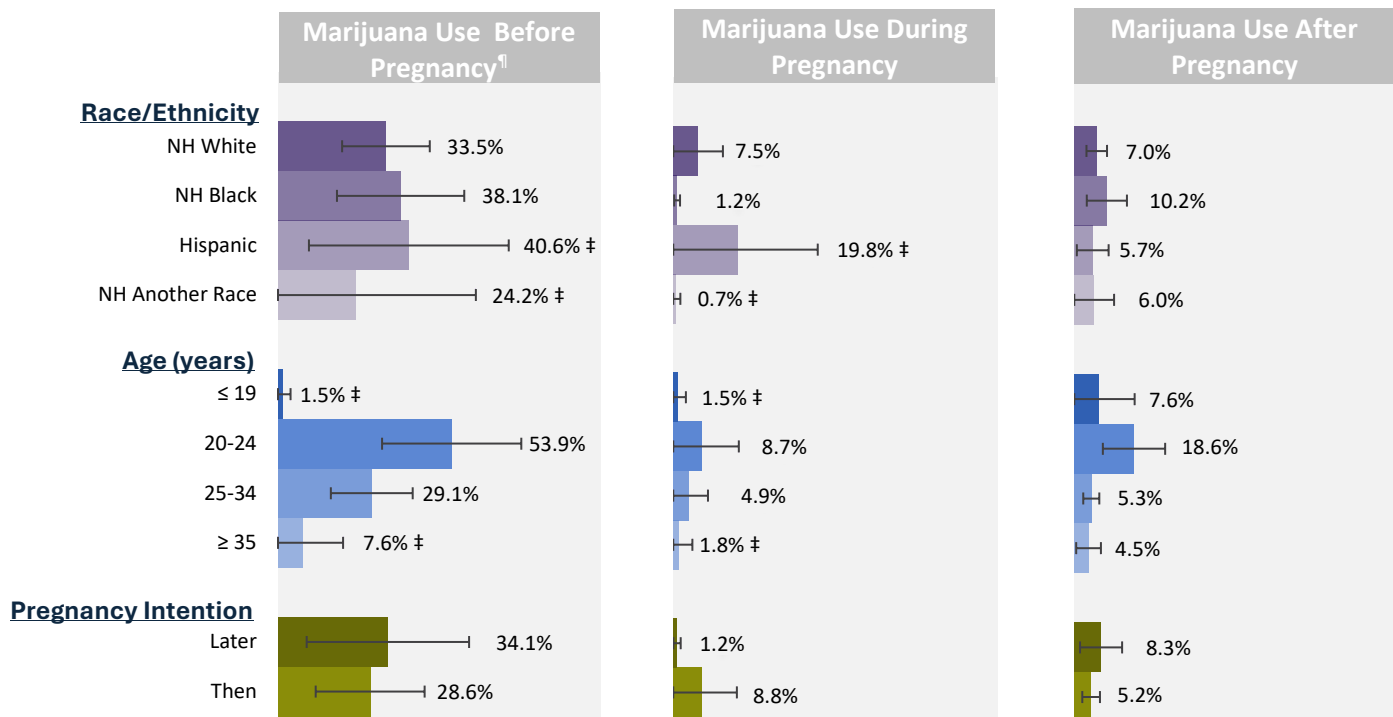
PRAMS Indicator	Virginia 2021-2023 % (95% Confidence Interval) [†]
Help with Sleep	89.2 (83.0-95.3)
Relieve Stress/Anxiety	73.5 (54.1-92.9)
Relieve Nausea	73.4 (21.4-100.0)

[±] Among women with a recent live birth who reported marijuana use during birth
[†] Weighted Percentage (95% Confidence Interval)



Virginia PRAMS: Perinatal Marijuana Use

Women Who Reported Marijuana Use Before[¶], During, or After Pregnancy, by Characteristics — Virginia, 2021-2023



Abbreviations: NH=non-Hispanic
 NH Another Race includes NH Asian or Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native, and other reported races
[¶] 3 months before pregnancy
[‡] < 30 respondents; may not be reliable
 Note: Bars display 95% Confidence Intervals

Summary

Overall, fewer women in Virginia reported using marijuana before and/or during pregnancy from 2022 to 2023, from 12.5% to 10.0%.³

Healthcare providers in Virginia screened over 50% of women for marijuana use during a prenatal care visit.

In 2023, of the 10% of moms reporting use before or during pregnancy in 2023, 91% used marijuana products to help with pain.

Resources

Cannabis and Public Health: <https://www.cdc.gov/cannabis/data-research/facts-stats/index.html>

Cannabis Control Authority: [Cannabis and Pregnancy Fact Sheet](#)

References:

1. Ryan, Sheryl A et al. "Marijuana Use During Pregnancy and Breastfeeding: Implications for Neonatal and Childhood Outcomes." Pediatrics vol. 142,3 (2018): e20181889. doi:10.1542/peds.2018-1889
2. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: National Substance Use and Mental Health Services Survey (N-SUMHSS), 2024: Annual Detailed Tables. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2025. <https://library.samhsa.gov>
3. <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/67/2024/06/Perinatal-Marijuana-Use-PRAMS-2021.pdf>

To learn more about Virginia PRAMS methods and to see other data visit:

<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/prams/>



THE BEST SOURCE OF DATA ON MOTHERS AND BABIES