

Marijuana Use Among Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women in Colorado

1) Introduction

In January 2014, Colorado was the first state in the nation to legalize recreational marijuana, and there was little research and evidence about the use of marijuana by pregnant and breastfeeding women, and the effects on them and their baby.

Because of this, Tri-County Health Department (TCHD) conducted a survey of WIC clients to assess marijuana use and to gain understanding regarding the educational needs around the health effects of marijuana use.

2) Response

3,137 clients had an on-site WIC appointment at TCHD WIC clinics during the 10-week survey period. **2,903** clients were asked to take the survey, and **1,749** were completed, resulting in an overall **60.2%** response rate.



3) Key Findings

- Overall prevalence of ever using marijuana among WIC mothers was **29.1%** [n=470].
- Overall prevalence of current marijuana use among WIC mothers (last 30 days) was **5.9%** [n=95].
 - Of the current marijuana users who regularly used marijuana during pregnancy (**35.8%**) [n=34] and after pregnancy (**41.1%**) [n=39], current users reported much less use while breastfeeding (**13.7%**) [n=13].
- Reasons for using marijuana among current users included depression, anxiety, stress, pain, nausea, and vomiting.
- WIC mothers who were past marijuana users reported substantially lower marijuana use during and after pregnancy as compared to current users.

4) Results

TCHD developed a website with marijuana resources and information; a brochure that focuses on marijuana use during pregnancy, breastfeeding and parenting; and a resource and referral guide for TCHD staff if they receive questions from the public regarding marijuana.

