

The SOGC Urges Canadians to Avoid Cannabis Use During Pregnancy and Breastfeeding

Ottawa – April 20, 2018 - The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (SOGC) today launched a public awareness campaign to inform those who are pregnant, breastfeeding, or of child-bearing age of the potential adverse effects associated with cannabis use during pregnancy and while breastfeeding.

“We know women are trying to do the best for their babies. Should cannabis become available for sale this summer, it is important that individuals be aware of the health risks, particularly for vulnerable populations such as pregnant women,” says Dr. Jennifer Blake, CEO SOGC.

Research suggests that 70% of pregnant and non-pregnant women believe there is a slight or no risk of harm from using cannabis once or twice a week during pregnancy. But the principal psychoactive component of cannabis, THC, crosses the placenta into fetal tissue and can also accumulate in breast milk. And the way cannabis is consumed—vaped, smoked, eaten, in pill or topical form, doesn’t matter.

Evidence-based studies suggest there may be potential short- and long-term growth and development issues associated with consuming cannabis during pregnancy and when breastfeeding including:

- Pre-term labour
- Low birth weight
- Lower IQ scores
- Impulsivity and hyperactivity in childhood

The SOGC awareness campaign will be delivered in two parts, with two educational videos and supporting social media campaigns on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube linking to the SOGC’s www.PregnancyInfo.ca website. The first video, "[Times Have Changed](#)" suggests that while tobacco and alcohol were not originally linked to adverse outcomes in pregnancy, we now know they are, and so urge Canadians to not make the same mistake with cannabis. Part two of the campaign and a video titled “Not Just an Herb” will launch later this summer.

“In light of the current research, our message is simple, don’t use cannabis when you are pregnant or breastfeeding, and please talk to your doctor.”

This educational campaign has been made possible with financial support from Health Canada.

For more information or to arrange a media interview please contact:

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About The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada

The SOGC is one of Canada's oldest national specialty organizations. Established in 1944, the Society's mission is to promote excellence in the practice of obstetrics and gynaecology and to advance the health of women through leadership, advocacy, collaboration and education. The SOGC represents obstetricians/gynaecologists, family physicians, nurses, midwives and allied health professionals working in the field of sexual reproductive health. For more information, please visit www.sogc.org