

## What you need to know:

# Opioids, Pregnancy and Breastfeeding



The safest option is to not use any opioids during pregnancy or when trying to become pregnant



In Canada, an estimated 1.1% to 1.4% of pregnant women said they use opioids

## Types of opioids

Prescription medications (such as hydromorphone or oxycodone)

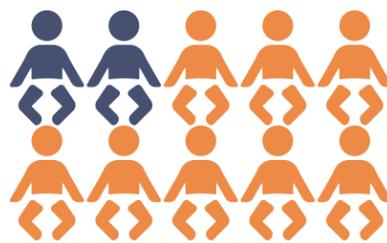
Unregulated opioids (street drugs such as heroin or non-prescribed fentanyl)

Opioid substitutes used for treatment of opioid dependence (such as methadone or buprenorphine)

Using opioids during pregnancy can increase the risk of:

- Low birth weight
- Preterm labour
- Miscarriage and stillbirth
- Temporary withdrawal symptoms in the baby after birth

Quitting or “detoxing” on your own during pregnancy is not recommended, as it may be harmful for you and your baby



50% to 80% of babies exposed to opioids during pregnancy have treatable withdrawal symptoms after birth

Breastfeeding and skin-to-skin contact are encouraged for most women taking opioids and can help improve the baby’s withdrawal symptoms

If you are using unregulated opioids, it is safest not to breastfeed because of a high risk of contamination in these drugs



Moms taking opioids and their babies do best with stable support and treatment during pregnancy and after birth

Speak with a health care provider to learn more about your options and to make a treatment plan to help keep you and your baby safe

To learn more about opioids, pregnancy and breastfeeding visit [pregnancyinfo.ca/opioids](https://pregnancyinfo.ca/opioids)

