

Cannabis Use in Pregnancy: Reasons for Use

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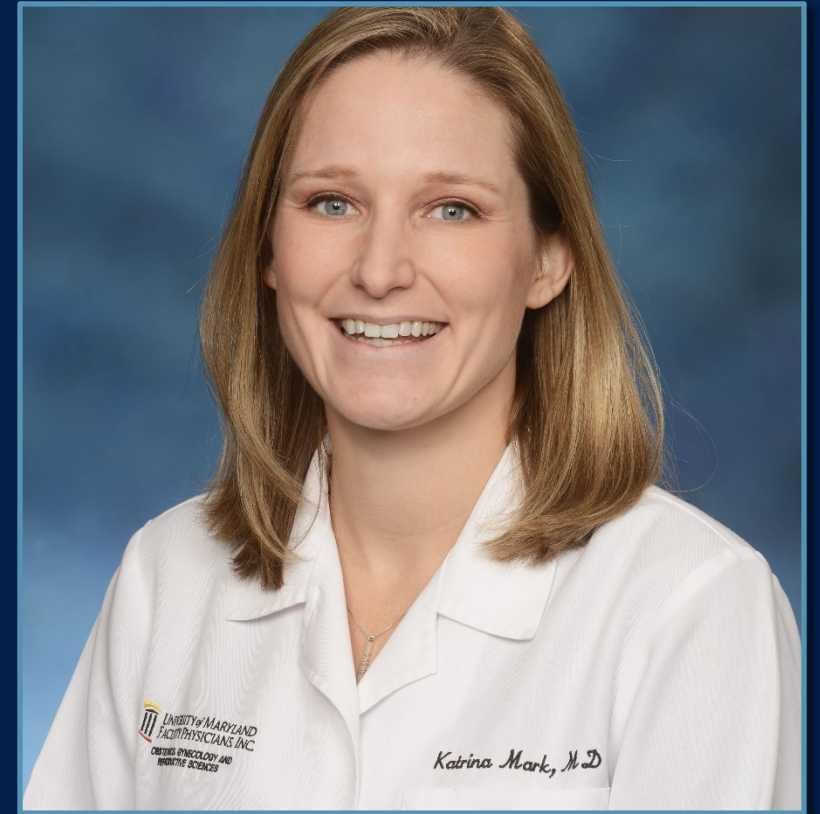
Disclosure Information (Required)

Cannabis Use in Pregnancy: Person Centered Perspectives

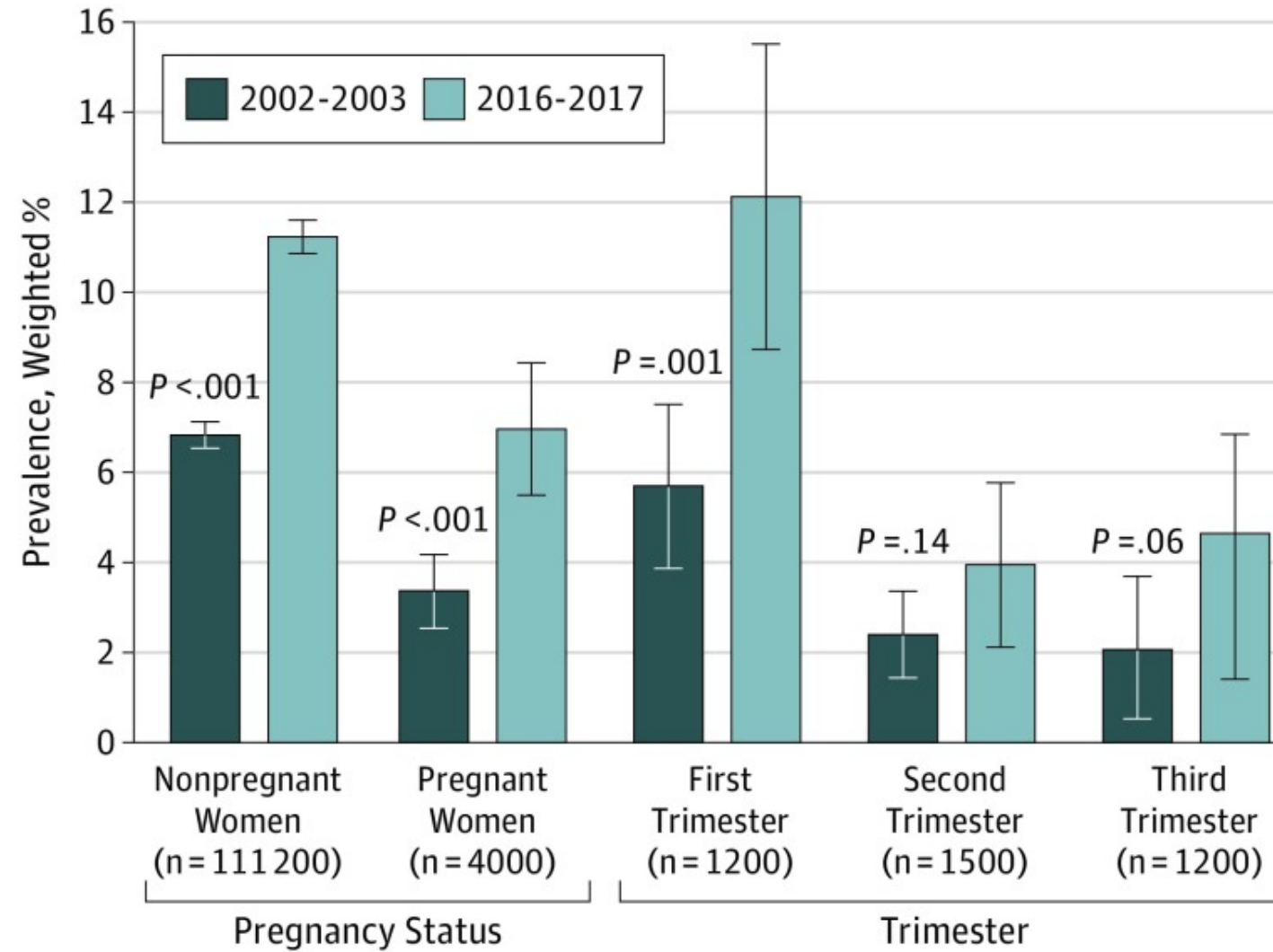
April 1, 2022 10:30AM

Katrina Mark

☀ No Disclosures



A Adjusted prevalence of past-month cannabis use



What is a Cannabis Use Disorder?

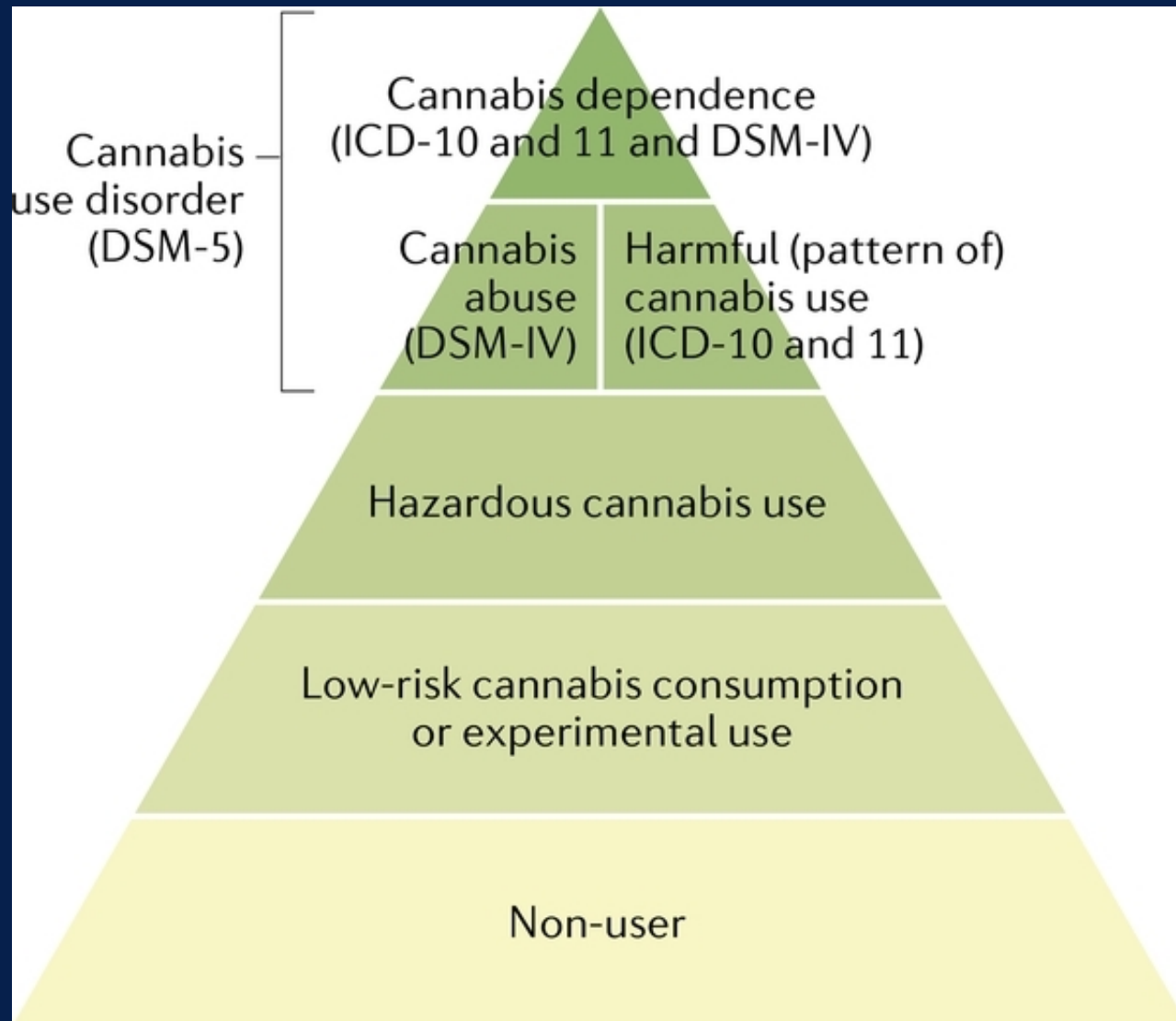
	DSM-5 Substance Use Disorders ^c	
Hazardous use	X	} ≥2 criteria
Social/interpersonal problems related to use	X	
Neglected major roles to use	X	
Legal problems	–	
Withdrawal ^d	X	
Tolerance	X	
Used larger amounts/longer	X	
Repeated attempts to quit/control use	X	
Much time spent using	X	
Physical/psychological problems related to use	X	
Activities given up to use	X	
Craving	X	

- Legal issues are no longer a criteria

Mild = 2-3 criteria

Moderate = 4-6 criteria

Severe = > 6 criteria



☀️ Pregnancy considerations

- ☀️ What is “hazardous use”
- ☀️ Is there a such thing as “low risk use” in pregnancy?
- ☀️ Social/interpersonal problems change
- ☀️ Identifying withdrawal in pregnancy

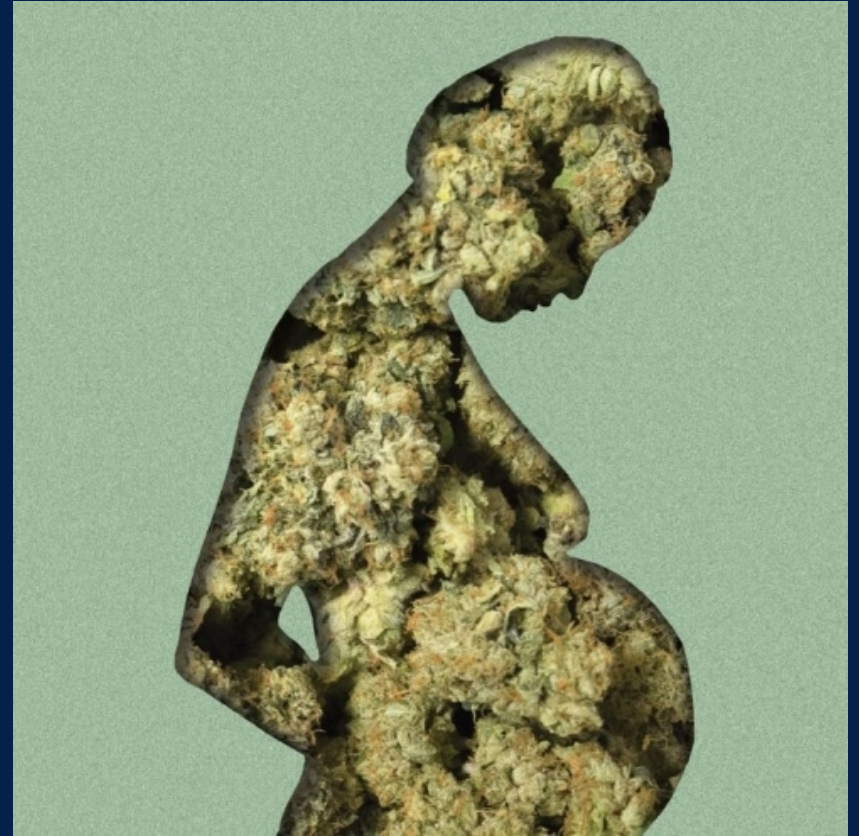
CUD in pregnancy

- ☀ Approximately ¼ of pregnant people who use at initiation of prenatal care will continue to use through the time of delivery
- ☀ *Continued use of a substance during pregnancy is pathognomonic for a use disorder.*
 - ☀ Adage is questioned with cannabis
 - ☀ “Medical” cannabis use is not always easily defined

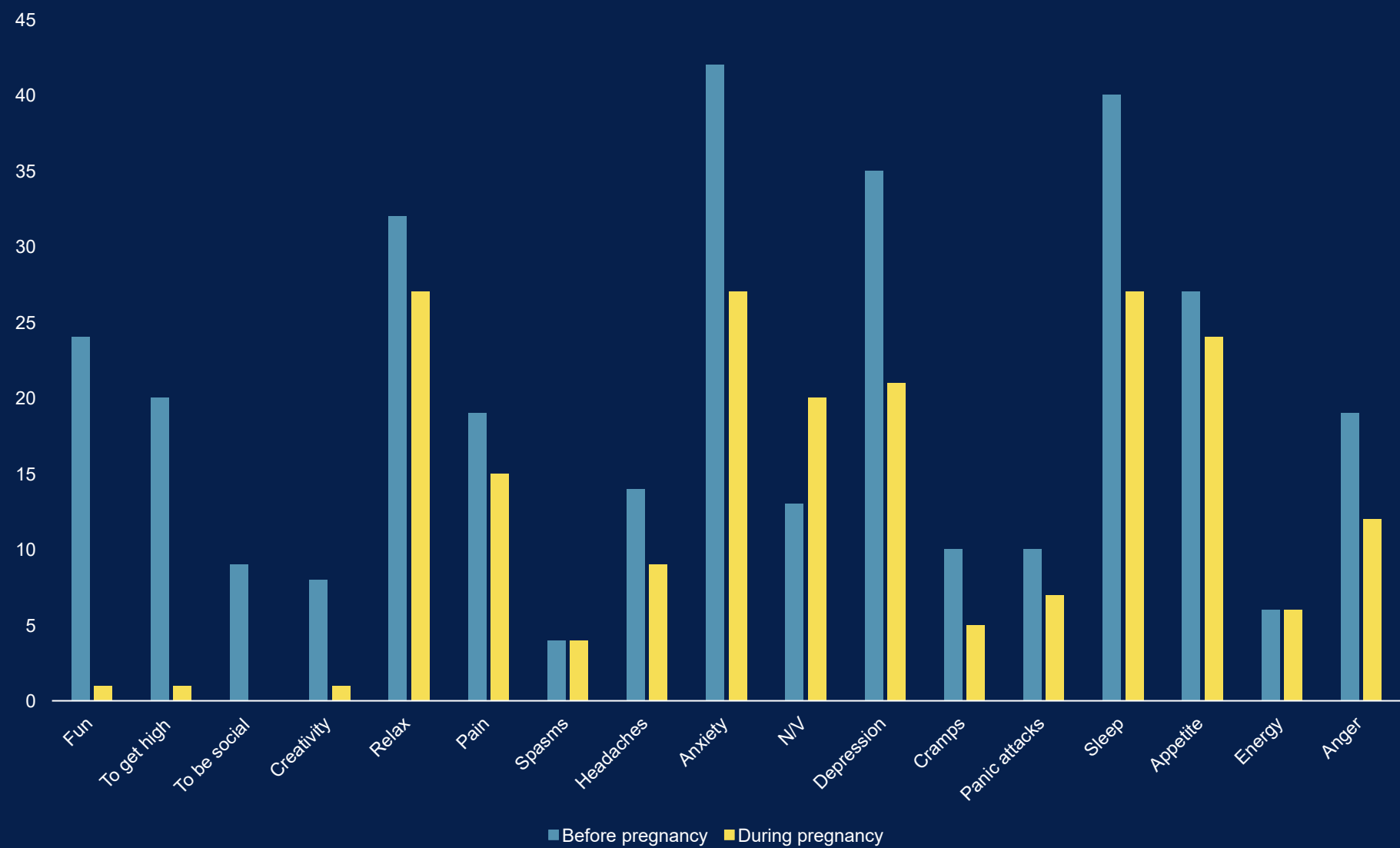


Reasons for use in pregnancy

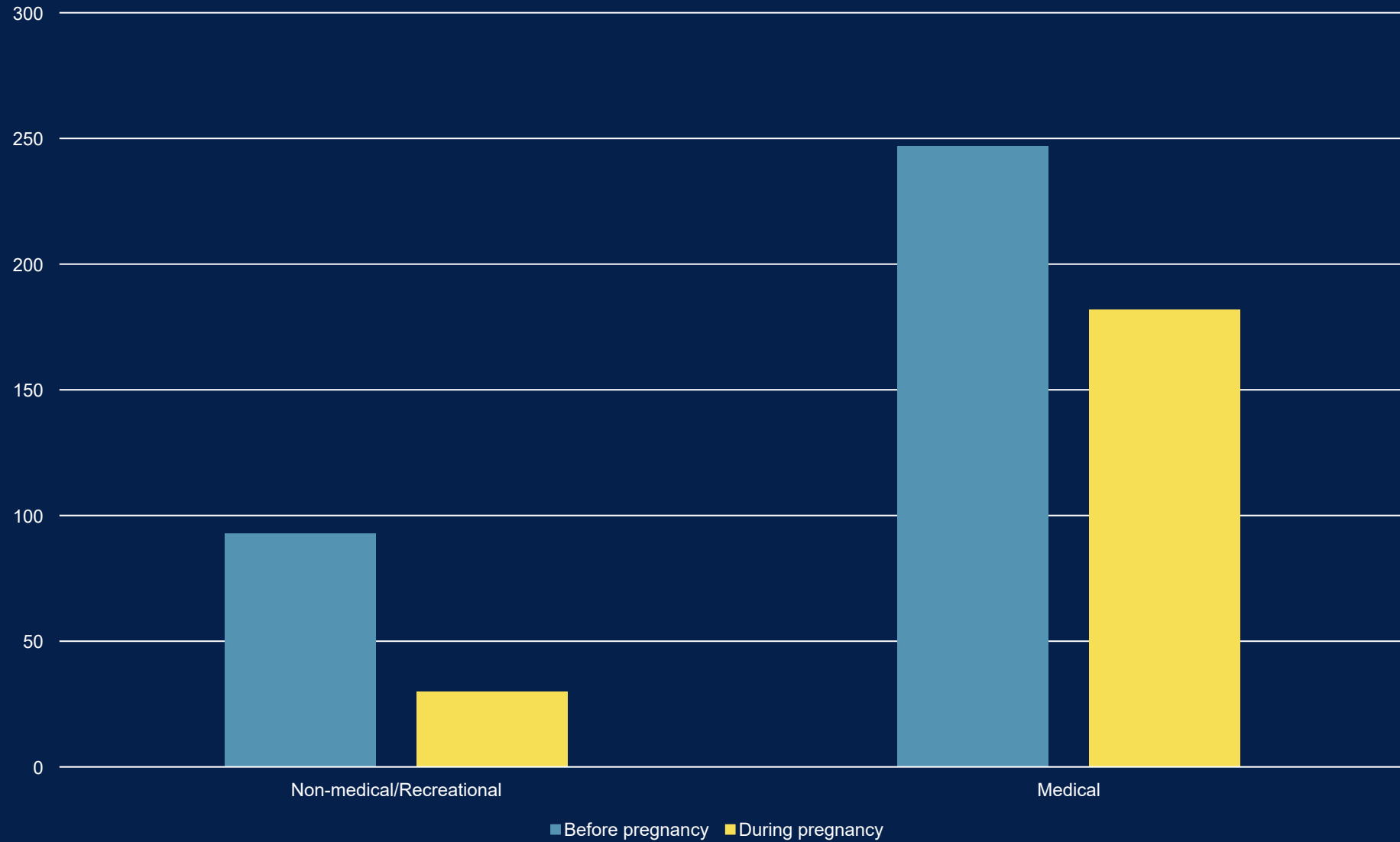
- ☀ Anonymous survey of pregnant people who screened positive for cannabis use by 4Ps Plus or urine toxicology
- ☀ Asked reasons for use prior to and during pregnancy



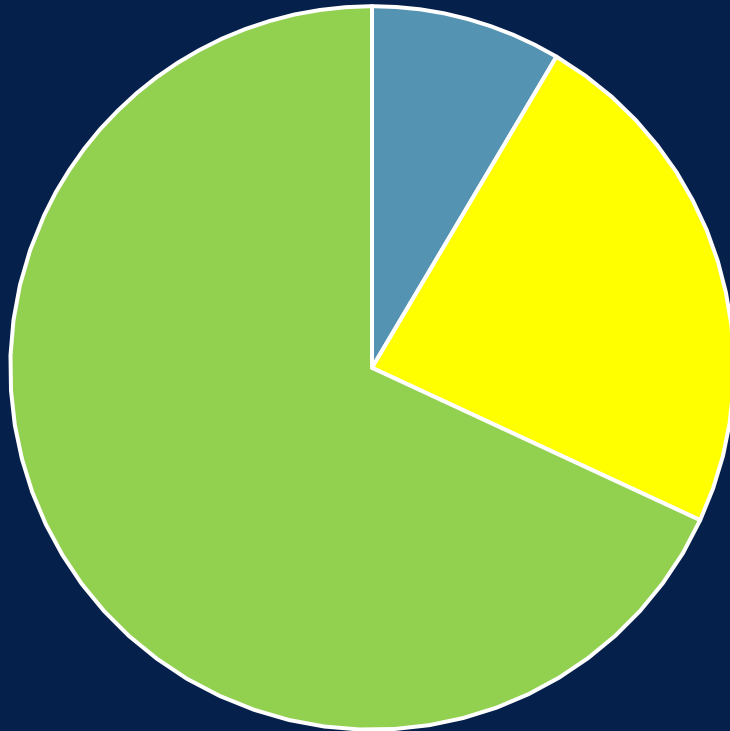
Self reported reasons for use



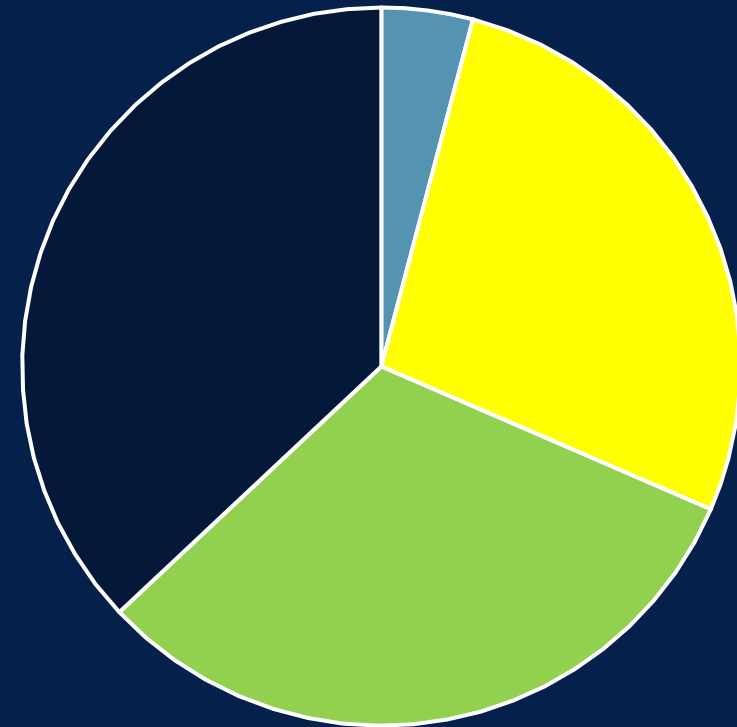
Non-medical versus Medical Use



Before pregnancy



During pregnancy



■ Non-medical/Recreational Only

■ Medical only

■ Mixed

Medical cannabis use in pregnancy

- ✱ Currently no approved indications in pregnancy
- ✱ Schedule 1 status does not allow for any well designed studies
- ✱ *Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence*

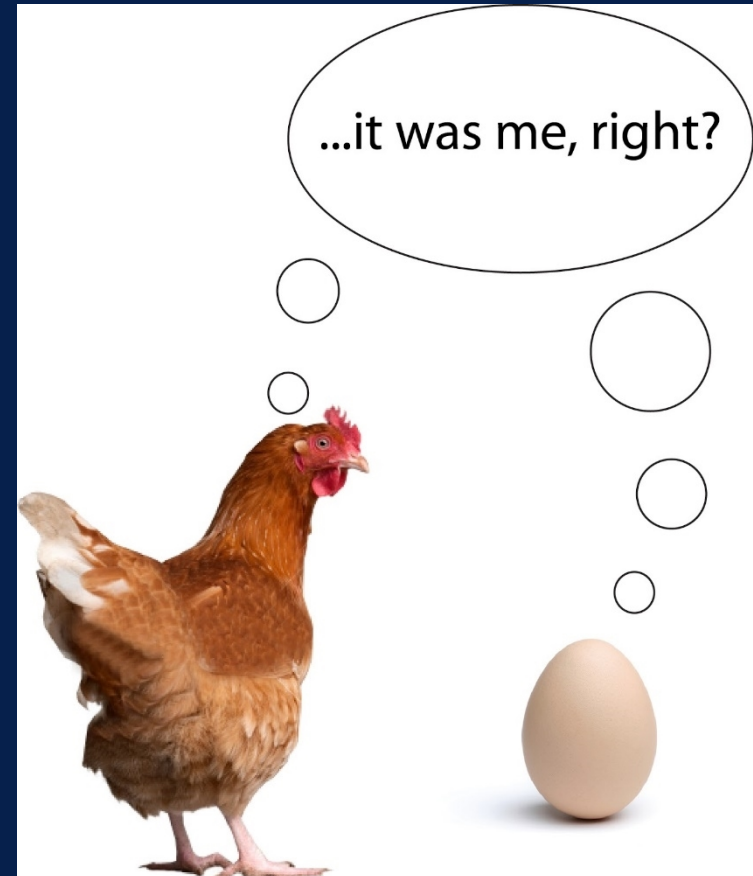
Cannabis Withdrawal

Most common symptoms

- Anger, aggression, irritability
- Anxiety/nervousness
- Decreased appetite or weight loss
- Restlessness
- Sleep difficulties including strange dreams

Less common symptoms

- Chills
- Depressed mood
- Stomach pain/physical discomfort
- Shakiness
- Sweating



Cannabis Hyperemesis Syndrome

☀ Nausea/vomiting and intense abdominal pain related to chronic cannabis use

Diagnostic characteristic	Frequency (%) (total <i>n</i> with criterion reported)	GRADE rating
History of regular cannabis use for years (over 1 year) [6, 16, 30, 51, 119, 120]	74.8 (179)	Low
Severe nausea and vomiting [16, 119, 120]	100 (211)	Low
Vomiting that recurs in a cyclic pattern over months [6, 30, 119, 121]	100 (211)	Low
Resolution of symptoms after stopping cannabis [6, 16, 30, 119–121]	96.8 (64)	Low
Reliable return of symptoms within weeks of resuming use [30]	^a	Low
Compulsive hot baths with symptom relief [6, 16, 30, 51, 119–121]	92.3 (170)	Low
Male predominance [121]	72.9 (227)	Low
Abdominal pain [30, 119–121]	85.1 (202)	Low
At least weekly cannabis use [16, 120]	97.4 (197)	Low
History of daily cannabis use [121]	76.6 (197)	Low
Age less than 50 at onset of illness [16, 120, 121]	100 (227)	Low
Normal bowel habits [16]	^a	Very low
Negative medical workup [16, 30, 119, 121]	^a	Very low
Weight loss >5 kg [16, 120]	^a	Very low

^a Criterion inconsistently documented in case reports, thus limiting frequency analysis

Chronic cannabis use

Conception

Nausea/vomiting of pregnancy

Increase cannabis use to self-treat nausea/vomiting

Nausea/vomiting worsens due to CHS



Treatment of CUD

- ☀ Motivational Interviewing/Motivational Enhancement Therapy
- ☀ Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- ☀ Contingency Management
- ☀ Social support counseling

Withdrawal

- ★ Important to educate patients that up to 50% of chronic users experience some symptoms of withdrawal
 - ★ Psychoeducation
 - ★ Coping skills training
- ★ Pharmacologic agents proposed for symptomatic relief
 - ★ Gabapentin
 - ★ Zolpidem
 - ★ Nitrazepam (not in the US)
 - ★ Dronabinol/nabiximols (not in US)

Recreational or Medical*?

Is a cannabis use disorder present?

Yes

Likely referral for treatment

No

SBIRT - Counsel regarding potential harms, recommend against use (schedule a follow up)

No

Recommend a trial of alternative treatment

Determine the disorder that is being treated. Is there reasonable evidence that cannabis treats this disorder?

Yes

Is there a safer treatment available?

Yes

No

What is the risk of the untreated disorder in pregnancy?
Discuss risks/benefits and unknowns.

**Medicinal is not limited to prescribed or recommended – the distinction is whether they are using it to treat an underlying disorder*



A well-educated mind will always
have more questions than answers.

— *Helen Keller* —

References (Required)

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