

# Missouri Title V Facts:

## **Substance Use**

#### BACKGROUND ----

Substance use refers to the act of engaging in the harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances which include alcohol, tobacco, and prescription/illicit drugs. The repeated use of these substances can cause someone to develop a dependence syndrome – often leading to an increased desire to continue using the substance and a difficulty in controlling its use. Often, substance use disorders occur in combination with other mental health conditions, such as depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, or bipolar disorder. This may be because certain mental health conditions can affect a person's decision-making process or have an effect in changing someone's mood or behaviors.<sup>2</sup> It is believed that smoking is one of the reason why people with mental health disorders experience more physical health problems and tend to die younger than those without mental health disorders.<sup>2</sup>

## SUBSTANCE USE WHILE PREGNANT \*\*\*

Across the United States, 21.4% (59.3 million people) aged 12 and older say they have used an illicit drug in the past year — a statistic primarily driven by marijuana and misuse of prescription pain relievers.³ For women who are pregnant, or who may become pregnant, this is especially important because substance use during pregnancy is associated with fetal growth restriction, stillbirth, and preterm birth. Substance use may also cause problems with neurological development, resulting in hyperactivity or poor cognitive function.⁴ Results from the 2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Women, showed significant increases in substance use, particularly marijuana among young women aged 18-25 . Pregnant women were shown to have an increase in illicit drug use between 2019 and 2020. Daily or almost daily marijuana use increased from 1.7% (36,000) to 2.8% (57,000).⁵

Figure 1. Substances Used Among Pregnant Women in Missouri

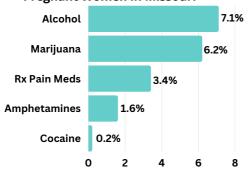
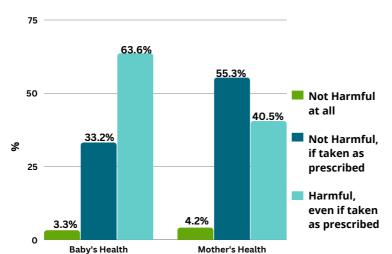


Figure 2. Perception on the Use of Rx Pain Relievers During Pregnancy

In addition to collecting information about a mother's behaviors and experiences surrounding the birth of their child, PRAMS also collects data regarding substance use during pregnancy. The most commonly reported substance used was alcohol (7.1%) followed by marijuana (6.2%) and prescription pain relievers (3.5%).6 In 2021, 7.8% of women said that they used substances during the pregnancy – a decrease from 9.7% in 2020.6



In 2019, PRAMs respondents were asked if they thought that the use of prescription pain relievers during pregnancy could be harmful to the baby's and their own health. Among these mothers, 40.5% felt that prescribed pain medication was harmful to a mother's health, and 63.6% felt that they were harmful to the baby's health.6

As light has been shed on the growing opioid epidemic across the United States, its effect on the health of women in Missouri has started to become clearer. Deaths from opioid overdoses have increased among all Missourians over the last 5 years, but black females are dying from opioid overdoses at nearly twice the rate as white females. The highest rates of deaths are seen during ages 25-34 which are prime child-bearing years for women. Across the state of Missouri, the counties with the highest rates of overdose deaths tend to be clustered around the St. Louis area.<sup>7</sup>

## **NEONATAL ABSTINENCE SYNDROME** ••••••

Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome, or NAS, is a drug withdrawal syndrome that occurs primarily among opioid-exposed infants shortly after birth. While in utero, a baby with NAS can experience poor fetal growth or even be born prematurely. After birth, babies often endure prolonged hospitalization to treat their withdrawals symptoms and can experience poor postnatal growth, dehydration, and seizures.8 In Missouri, rates for NAS continue to increase. In 2021, 754 babies were discharged from Missouri hospitals

after being treated for NAS – an increase from 442 babies in 2017. In addition, Black infants are at a higher risk to experience NAS than white babies – 13 per 10,000 live births compared to 9 per 10,000 live births for 2021, respectively.9 For more information please visit the Missouri NAS dashboard found at <a href="https://health.mo.gov/data/opioids/nas.php">https://health.mo.gov/data/opioids/nas.php</a>.

### QUICK FACTS - SUBSTANCE USE IN MISSOURI - - - - -

Figure 3. Youth Substances Estimates. SAMHSA 2018-2019<sup>10</sup>

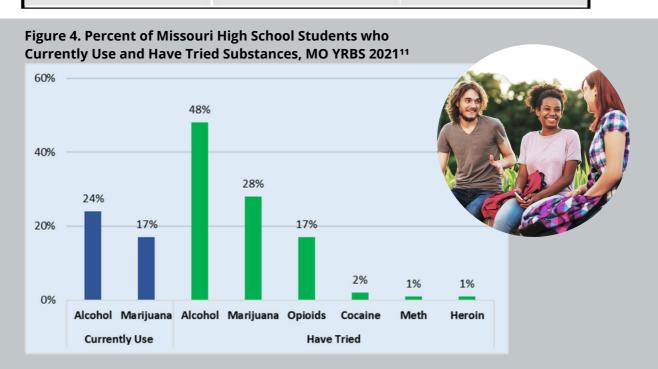
SAMHSA estimates that among youth aged 12-17 in Missouri...

19,000

have some sort of substance use disorder 27,000

smoked marijuana in the past month, **55k** smoked in past year 13,000

misused pain relievers in past year



### REFERENCES ----

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