Today’s piece was prepared by Jordan Wallace, MD and comes from a CNN article [Marijuana use during pregnancy linked to autism in babies, study says](https://www.cnn.com/2020/08/10/health/weed-marijuana-pregnancy-autism-link-wellness/index.html).

This article discusses a recent *Nature Medicine* study of autism associated with in utero marijuana exposure, finding 1.5 times increased risk of autism. The article includes mention of increased risks of additional outcomes, including low birth weight, impulsivity and hyperactivity. The CNN article delves further into the background of the study and, while highlighting some study pitfalls (e.g., failure to quantify the marijuana use), the article doesn’t discuss any statistics and provides very few numbers, but moves on to talk about rising rates of marijuana use and contemporary reasons many pregnant women use marijuana. Last, it provides advice to pregnant women who are using marijuana and creates a sense of urgency through call to action in order to address this problem.

Overall, the information is consistent with the underlying study; however, its brevity and lack of complex data, and its literary style, such as opening the article by stating “largest study ever done” peppered with the author’s remark that “these are not reassuring findings”, seem designed to stir up emotion with intrigue, urgency, and - in some ways - fear.

**RESOURCE FOR CANNABIS PRENATAL COUNSELING**

[CDC Pregnancy Fact Sheet](https://www.cdc.gov/marijuana/factsheets/pregnancy.htm) s*uccinct resource for counseling women regarding marijuana and its effects on pregnancy.*

And that’s today’s Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics: IN THE NEWS!