

[← Back to News Hub](#)

NATIONAL NEWS CURRENT AFFAIRS

 01/06/2026 08:58

New study – Cannabis causes exponential rise in ‘hole in the heart’

Drug Free Australia

 2 mins read

Media:



Media Release

A landmark new study published by one of world's most elite scientific journals, **Nature - Journal of Perinatology**, has demonstrated that rising US cannabis use is causally responsible for exponential increases in a birth defect commonly called ‘hole in the heart’ or Atrial Septal Defect (ASD), where US rates that measured 10.3 cases for every 10,000 births in 2005 have moved amongst certain ethnicities to as high as 884/10,000 in Nevada and Mississippi in 2020, or about 1 in 11 babies affected.

The study used careful statistical adjustments to show that the effect was truly causal. The findings are even more significant when it is recognized that many common birth defects lead to the termination of a pregnancy, whereas ASD generally doesn't. This means that the causal role of cannabis in this particular birth defect may be the canary in the coal mine, signaling not only the likely involvement of cannabis in other birth defects but that these rises in ASD rates are the bellwether marker for other cannabinoid genotoxic effects including human aging and some cancers.

In Nevada careful statistical modelling shows an exponential rate of rise. Across the USA ASD rates are rising faster than exponentially. As one reviewer of the paper wrote:

"... regarding statistical analysis and "causation" this manuscript has relevance to pediatric cardiologists, neonatologists, and above all to obstetricians who should more strongly advise against the use of cannabis (in any form) during pregnancy. Indeed, this reviewer believes that this is a landmark study, and with the revised data analysis, much more strongly points to causation rather than mere association. Extremely important for public health advisories against cannabis use during pregnancy (and most probably for paternal cannabis use during partner's pregnancy)."

Other peer-reviewed cannabis population studies by the same researchers show that cannabis is causal in twice as many cancers as tobacco and numerous other birth defects in both Europe and the USA. The effects on human ageing are extremely concerning indeed when rolled out across whole populations including eggs, sperm and babies.

Says Gary Christian, President of Drug Free Australia, "This is an issue that the media urgently needs to bring to the attention of the Australian people given a heavy reliance in this country on medicinal cannabis, which presents all of these risks to both the child bearing and general populations." This is a discussion we urgently need to have.

Contact details:

Contact:

Study co-author Dr Stuart Reece University of WA/Edith Cowan University

0424 439 639

More from this category

Media Outreach made fast, easy, simple.

Feature your press release on Medianet's News Hub every time you distribute with Medianet. Pay per release or save with a subscription.

[Book a demo →](#)

[Explore our plans →](#)

medianet.

← **Back to main site**

© Medianet 2026 All rights reserved.

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Terms and conditions](#)

[Anti spam policy](#)