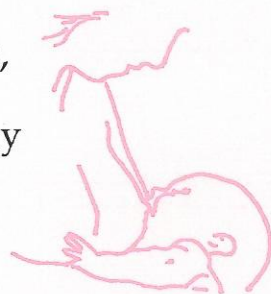


MEDICINES AND BREASTFEEDING

Most medicines and drugs pass into the milk of mothers who are breastfeeding (nursing mothers) to some extent. The amount passing into the milk and whether it will affect the baby varies from medicine to medicine, and also depends on such things as the dose taken, the health of mother and baby, and the amount of milk taken by the baby. Also, some medicines may reduce the milk supply. **When breastfeeding, always check with your doctor or pharmacist before taking any medicine.**



RISKS

Some medicines or drugs taken by nursing mothers may affect the baby.

Medicines and drugs include prescription and non-prescription medicines, herbal medicines, alcohol, nicotine, caffeine and illegal drugs. The use of any medicine or drug while breastfeeding must be thought about carefully by weighing up the pros and cons and discussing them with your doctor or pharmacist.

SELF CARE

- Don't smoke or drink alcohol.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist before taking any medicine.
- Only take medicines that are really necessary (ask your doctor).

- If you have to take a medicine while breastfeeding, have the baby checked regularly for any adverse effects that may occur.
- Take any medicines straight after the baby has fed to ensure the lowest level of medicine in the milk at the next feeding.
- Don't worry if you must take a medicine - your continued good health is important for successful breastfeeding.
- Remember that breastfeeding has nutritional, emotional, physical and practical benefits for you and your baby.

Recommended Reading:
Batagol R
Drugs and Breastfeeding
CSL Pharmaceuticals, 1996

Your **Self Care** pharmacist

ADEC

Medicines in Pregnancy
Australian Government Publishing Service, 1996

Contact:

Your doctor (listed under Medical Practitioners in the yellow pages of the phone book).

Nursing Mothers Association of Australia (listed under 'N' in the white pages of the phone book).

Your **Self Care** pharmacist
To find: (02) 6281 1366

In case of poisoning, phone the Poisons Information Centre on 131 126 from anywhere in Australia.



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Pharmacists are medicines experts. Ask your pharmacist for advice when choosing a medicine.



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IMPORTANT: Always check with your pharmacist or doctor. If a medicine or drug doesn't appear in these lists it doesn't mean it is safe for use while breastfeeding.

NON PRESCRIPTION MEDICINE OR DRUG*

*Regulations vary from state to state

EFFECT ON MILK OR BABY

alcohol

- Regular use is harmful. Even occasional use can be a risk

analgesics for pain relief, fever

- aspirin (eg, *Disprin, Aspro, Codis, Aspalgin*, etc)
- paracetamol (eg, *Panadol, Dymadon, Tylenol*, etc)
- ◆ codeine (in *Panadeine, Dymadon Co, Codral*, etc)
- NSAIDs (eg, *Naproxen, Ponstan, ACT-3, Nurofen, Actiprofen, Tri-profen*)

- Occasional use is safe, regular use (eg, for arthritis) could be harmful.
- No known harmful effects with occasional use.
- ◆ No known harmful effects with occasional use.
- Use with care. Discuss with pharmacist (see *Pain Relievers Fact Card*).

antihistamines for hayfever, etc

- *Phenergan, Polaramine*
- *Zadine, Hismanal, Zyrtec, Telfast, Claratyne*

- No known harmful effects. May cause baby to be irritable. May lessen milk supply. Discuss with pharmacist.
- Use is not recommended.

antidiarrhoeals for gastroenteritis

- kaolin (eg, *Kaomagna, Kaopectate*, etc)
- loperamide (*Imodium, Gastrostop*).

- No known harmful effects.
- Use with care. Discuss with pharmacist.

atropine (in *Contac, Domagel, Atrobel*, etc)

- Use with care. May cause dry mouth. May lessen milk supply. Discuss with pharmacist.

caffeine (in coffee, tea, cola)

- 4 or more cups per day of drinks containing caffeine may cause baby to be irritable.

coughs and colds

- dextromethorphan (eg, *Robitussin DM, Cepacol Cough and Sore Throat Lozenges*)
- phenylpropanolamine, phenylephrine (eg, *Nyal Decongestant, Dimetapp LA*, etc)
- ◆ pholcodine (eg, *Tussinol, Duro-Tuss*, etc)
- pseudoephedrine (eg, *Sudafed, Demazin, Dimetapp Cold/Sinus, Nucosel, Codral Cold and Flu*, etc).

- No known harmful effects.
- Use with care. May lessen milk supply, cause baby to be irritable. Discuss with pharmacist.
- ◆ No known harmful effects.
- Use with care. May lessen milk supply, cause baby to be irritable. Discuss with pharmacist.

heartburn and indigestion

- antacids (eg, *Mylanta, Gaviscon*, etc)
- *Pepcid, Zantac*.

- No known harmful effects with occasional use.
- Use with care. Discuss with pharmacist.

herbals (eg, *Comfrey, Ginseng* etc).

- Use could be harmful. Check with doctor or pharmacist.

inhaled bronchodilators for asthma

(eg, *Ventolin, Bricanyl, Respolin, Asmol* etc).

- No known harmful effects.

iron preparations for anaemia

(eg, *Fefol, Ferrogradumet, Fergon*, etc).

- No known harmful effects in recommended dosage.

iodides (in some cough mixtures eg, Potassium Iodide and Stramonium mixture, some vitamin formulas).

- Do not use unless advised by doctor.

laxatives for constipation

- bulk forming (eg, *Metamucil, Agiofibe*, etc)
- stimulant laxatives (eg, *Durolax, Senokot*)

- No known harmful effects.
- May cause diarrhoea in baby.

nicotine

- smoking
- chewing tablets (eg, *Nicorette, Nicotinell*)
- ◆ patches (eg, *Nicabate, Nicorette, Nicotinell*)

- Can lessen milk supply, cause vomiting and diarrhoea in baby.
- Use is not recommended.
- ◆ Use is not recommended.

Thrush

- *Canesten, Gyno-Lotremin, Nilstat*
- *Gyno-Daktarin*

- No known harmful effects.
- Use with care. Discuss with pharmacist.

Vitamins

- Care with vitamins A, D, E, pyridoxine, thiamine in large doses (ask your pharmacist).

worm medicines (eg, *Combantrin, Banworm, Vermox*)

- No known harmful effects.

REMEMBER - always tell your doctor and pharmacist that you are breastfeeding when discussing any health problems that may require a medicine.

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