

# Breastfeeding and Medication Guidelines

## Can I take medications and breastfeed?

- Yes, with some exceptions.
- Work with your doctor to find a medication that treats your condition and is safe while breastfeeding.

### The Drugs Listed Below are Usually Compatible with Breastfeeding

#### Cold and Allergy

Check for the word “decongestant” or the ingredient pseudoephedrine. Many will have “D” in the name like Claritin-D or Coricidin-D. These are safe for baby, but have been shown to lower your milk supply.

- Benadryl (Diphenhydramine HCl)
- Tylenol Cold, Advil Cold and Sinus, TheraFlu, Alka-Seltzer Plus Cold, Dristan (may include Acetaminophen, Ibuprofen, Chlorpheniramine, Pseudoephedrine, Dextromethorphan)
- Claritin, Alavert (Loratadine)
- Zyrtec (Cetirizine HCl)
- Robitussin, Mucinex (Guaifenesin)
- Vicks 44

#### Digestion/Stomach

- Pepto-Bismol (Bismuth Subsalicylate)
- Imodium (Loperamide)
- Tums (Calcium Carbonate)
- Maalox (Aluminum Hydroxide, Magnesium Hydroxide, Simethicone)
- Milk of Magnesia (Magnesium Hydroxide)
- Gas-X (Simethicone)
- Miralax
- Metamucil (Psyllium Husk)
- Benefiber, FiberSure
- Ex-Lax (Bisacodyl)

#### Nasal Sprays

- Ocean (Saline)
- Nasalcrom (Cromolyn Sodium)
- Afrin, Neo-Syneprine (Oxymetazoline HCl)

#### Pain Relievers/Fever Reducers

These are better choices than aspirin when breastfeeding, due to some extremely rare possible complications.

- Tylenol (Acetaminophen)
- Advil, Motrin IB (Ibuprofen)
- Aleve (Naproxen Sodium)

#### Stop Smoking

- All OTC nicotine quit aids:
  - ◆ Nicotine patch, Gum, Lozenge, Inhaler
  - ❖ Nicorette, Nicotrol, NicoDerm, Commit, Habitrol

This list does not include **all** medications that are safe during breastfeeding. Always check with your doctor to see if medications are appropriate for you or your baby.

## The Drugs Listed Below are NOT Compatible with Breastfeeding

### Alcohol

- Alcohol passes into breastmilk in small quantities. To minimize the amount of alcohol your baby receives, feed baby before you drink and wait several hours after drinking to breastfeed.
- “Pumping and dumping” does not lower the amount of alcohol in your milk. Over time, your blood alcohol levels drop and your milk contains less alcohol.
- Daily drinking and binge drinking are not safe while breastfeeding.

### Street Drugs

Illegal drugs are NEVER safe while breastfeeding. These include:

- Marijuana
- Cocaine
- Heroin
- Methamphetamine

Always check with your doctor before taking any medications. If you need information on a specific drug, you can call the WIC clinic or the **24 Hour Breastfeeding Hotline** at **1-800-833-4643**.



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