

Breastfeeding and medication

Most medications are compatible with breastfeeding, and for those few medications that are a safety issue there are usually acceptable substitutions. Although mothers are frequently told they need to stop breastfeeding (temporarily or permanently) to take a medication, this is rarely necessary.

According to Thomas Hale, RPh, PhD (Medications and Mothers' Milk 2014, p. 7-12): "It is generally accepted that all medications transfer into human milk to some degree, although it is almost always quite low. Only rarely does the amount transferred into milk produce clinically relevant doses in the infant... Most importantly, it is seldom required that a breastfeeding mother discontinue breastfeeding just to take a medication. It is simply not acceptable for the clinician to stop lactation merely because of heightened anxiety or ignorance on their part. The risks of formula feeding are significant and should not be trivialized. Few drugs have documented side effects in breastfed infants, and we know most of these."

[The InfantRisk Center \(1-806-352-2519\)](#), headed by Dr. Thomas Hale in the US, has a phone helpline and additional information on medication use during pregnancy and breastfeeding. This information is available from Monday – Friday, 8am – 5pm CT

Talking to baby's health care provider (in addition to your own doctor) is also a good idea. Please call our office if you need additional information regarding medication compatibility with breastfeeding.

(Adapted Reference: kellymom.com)