

Analgesics^{2,3} (Pain killers)

Paracetamol and Ibuprofen form the basis for safe analgesics for breastfeeding mothers.

Products containing aspirin should be avoided because of the risk of Reye's syndrome. If such products are taken in error it is not a reason to interrupt breastfeeding as the risk is remote but these products should not be continued.

Asthma and Breastfeeding^{2,3}

Asthma inhalers - relievers or preventers - are safe to use as normal during breastfeeding.

Reliever inhalers - Eg: Salbutamol, Formoterol, Terbutaline, Salmeterol.

Preventer inhalers - Eg: beclomethasone, budesonide, fluticasone, mometasone.

Compound inhalers. Eg: Symbicort®(budesonide plus formoterol), Seretide®(fluticasone plus salmeterol)

Leukotriene receptor antagonists such as Montelukast can be used if needed. There is limited research but amount in breastmilk appears significantly lower than that licensed to be given to a 6 month old baby.

Acute attacks may necessitate use of a course of oral steroids, normally 40mg (8 x 5mg tablets) prednisolone. These can be taken during breastfeeding without risk to the baby. Some authorities recommend waiting 4 hours after taking the once daily dose to minimise transfer but this is usually only necessary with doses in excess of 40mg.

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DRUGS USE IN BREASTFEEDING MOTHERS PART I

The following antibiotics are all safe to take whilst breastfeeding^{2,3}:

Amoxicillin, Azithromycin, Cefuroxime, Cephalexin, Clarithromycin, Co-amoxiclav, Erythromycin, Penicillin V (Phenoxymethyl penicillin).

Can breast feeding mothers take antihistamines for allergies?^{2,3}

Nasal Spray- Steroid nasal spray can be very effective and virtually no passage into milk because they act only locally. Eg: Beclomethasone, Fluticasone, Budesonide, Mometasone.

Tablet- Non sedating antihistamine are preferred such as loratadine. Sedating antihistamines such as cetirizine, chlorpheniramine and promethazine can be use for short courses only.

Cough and cold remedies^{2,3}

Oral decongestants should be avoided by breastfeeding mothers as they can dramatically reduce milk supply with just one or two doses. e.g. pseudoephedrine

Examples of drugs contraindicated in breastfeeding¹

Drug	Comment
Amiodarone	Long half-life, iodine-containing molecule, and may affect thyroid function in infant
Antineoplastics	Leukopenia, bone marrow suppression
Gold salts	Rash, nephritis, haematological abnormalities
Iodine	High doses (>150 micrograms daily) lead to risk of infant hypothyroidism
Lithium	Breastfeeding only feasible with rigorous monitoring
Radiopharmaceuticals	Contact obstetric information service
Retinoids (oral)	Potential for serious adverse effects

References

1. Hotham, N., & Hotham, E. (2015). Drugs in breastfeeding. Australian prescriber, 38(5), 156–159. doi:10.18773/austprescr.2015.056
2. Breastfeeding Network May 2017
3. Lactmed(R)