



IABLE

Institute for the Advancement of
Breastfeeding & Lactation Education

Over-The-Counter Medications During Lactation

Pain Medications

Avoid products with aspirin

Preferred medications are:

- Acetaminophen, no more than 3000mg/24 hours
- Ibuprofen, no more than 800mg every 6 hours
- Naproxen is less ideal than ibuprofen because naproxen has a longer 1/2-life.

Cold Medications

Avoid all oral and intranasal products with decongestants such as pseudoephedrine and phenylephrine, because these can cause a significant decrease in milk production.

Preferred medications are:

- Guaifenesin for nasal congestion and cough
- Dextromethorphan for a cough
- Nasal saline preparations

Allergy Medications

Preferred medications are:

- Non-sedating antihistamines such as loratadine, fexofenadine or cetirizine for sneezing and itchy eyes/nose, itching and hives.
- Stronger antihistamines such as diphenhydramine and chlorpheniramine can cause irritability in the baby and might reduce the milk production in high doses or regular use.
- Nasal cromolyn sodium
- Nasal steroids
- Topical steroid creams/ointments such as hydrocortisone

Heartburn

Preferred medications are:

- Famotidine
- Omeprazole, lansoprazole
- Antacids such as calcium carbonate, magnesium hydroxide, aluminum hydroxide

Constipation

Preferred medications are:

- Docusate Sodium stool softeners
- Magnesium hydroxide
- Polyethylene glycol
- Bisacodyl
- Fiber supplements such as psyllium, calcium polycarbophil, methylcellulose fiber, wheat dextrin
- Magnesium citrate
- Senna

Diarrhea

Preferred medications are:

- Loperamide Bismuth subsalicylate, when used occasionally.
- Regular use can increase salicylate levels in the infant and cause metabolic acidosis.

Motion Sickness

Preferred medications are:

- Meclizine. Watch for infant sedation. It may reduce milk production with high doses or regular use.
- Dimenhydrinate (Dramamine). It may reduce milk production with high doses or regular use.