

## Drugs in breastfeeding

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This activity was developed by Australian Prescriber based on the content of the article, which can be read in full at <http://www.australianprescriber.com/magazine/38/5/156/9>

### SUMMARY

Most commonly used drugs are relatively safe for breastfed babies. The dose received via milk is generally small and much less than the known safe doses of the same drug given directly to neonates and infants.

Drugs contraindicated during breastfeeding include anticancer drugs, lithium, oral retinoids, iodine, amiodarone and gold salts.

An understanding of the principles underlying the transfer into breast milk is important, as is an awareness of the potential adverse effects on the infant.

Discussion with the mother about the possibility of either negative product information or ill-informed advice from others will reduce the confusion and anxiety that may be generated.

Good resources about medicines and breastfeeding are available and include state-based medicines information services.

### Learning Objectives

1. Identify medicines which can be safely taken by breastfeeding women
2. Understand how drugs are excreted in breast milk

### Pharmacist Competency Standards

- 1.4 Manage quality and safety
- 4.2 Consider the appropriateness of prescribed medicines
- 7.1 Contribute to therapeutic decision making

*These standards are in National Competency Standards Framework for Pharmacists in Australia 2010.*

### Questions

Visit <http://sgiz.mobi/s3/Drugs-in-breastfeeding> to complete this activity

1. Which of the following is least likely to be of clinical significance in the excretion of a drug into breast milk?

- a) size of the molecule
- b) lipid solubility
- c) ionisation
- d) drug concentration in maternal plasma
- e) maternal plasma protein bonding

This CPD activity should take around one hour to complete. It can be included in a pharmacist's CPD plan for two Group 2 non-accredited CPD credits. Pharmacists should self-record this activity.

To complete this Group 2 activity, you should read the article and complete the online quiz. The questions are based on the content of the article.

The correct responses will be forwarded to the email address you provide, with proof of your participation, when you electronically submit answers to the questions. There will also be space to reflect on your responses and what you have learned through this activity.

(Note that Australian Prescriber CPD activities are not accredited by the Australian Pharmacy Council.)

## 2. True or false?

- a) Active secretion is the primary pathway by which drugs enter breast milk
- b) Women who are slow metabolisers may excrete significant amounts of codeine in their breast milk
- c) Drugs with a short half-life are best taken just before a breast feed
- d) Gentamicin should not be given to breastfeeding women because it is completely absorbed from the baby's gut
- e) Metronidazole alters the taste of breast milk

## 3. Which of the following drugs are contraindicated in breastfeeding?

- a) iodine
- b) retinoids
- c) metoclopramide
- d) sertraline
- e) warfarin

## 4. The dose of a drug received by a breastfed baby is a proportion of the mother's dose. In general, which relative infant dose would be a cause for concern?

- a) 0.1%
- b) 1%
- c) 2%
- d) 5%
- e) 10%

**Answers will be provided via email on completion of the activity at the link above.**

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