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Donating Breastmilk and taking Medication

The information provided is taken from various reference sources. It is provided as a guideline. No responsibility can be taken by the author or the Breastfeeding Network for the way in which the information is used.

Clinical decisions remain the responsibility of milk banks. The data presented here is intended to provide some immediate information but cannot replace input from the milk bank to which you are donating.

In February 2010 the NICE Guideline on Donor Breastmilk Banks was published. www.nice.org.uk/CG93

Donor breast milk is defined as breast milk expressed by a mother that is then processed by a donor milk bank for use by a recipient who is not the mother's own baby.

Potential donor mothers are screened to establish any medication which she is taking, or medical treatment she is having that may prevent her being eligible to donate milk, although she may be able to take this medication whilst feeding her own fit, term baby. If there are any concerns please contact the BfN Drugs in Breastmilk Helpline via the Breastfeeding Network website or on 0844 412 4665

Donors are also advised to contact the milk bank to discuss suspending or stopping their milk donation if they begin taking any medication e.g. antibiotics for a sudden illness or an ongoing condition.

Mothers can usually continue to breastfeed their own infants whilst taking medication but it is important that recipient babies, who may be very premature or ill, are not exposed to any drug through donated milk as it may interact with medication that they are being given directly or affect their medical condition e.g. by causing drowsiness or diarrhoea

To find your nearest Breastfeeding Supporter call the Supporterline 0300 100 0210

Calls to 0300 numbers cost no more than calls to UK numbers starting 01 and 02 and will be part of any inclusive minutes that apply to your provider and call package

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Drugs which may be used by a mother who is donating breastmilk

- Paracetamol
- Progesterone only contraceptive pill, depot injections or IUD
- Asthma inhalers – both preventative inhalers e.g. beclomethasone (Clenil or Qvar) or relievers e.g. salbutamol (Ventolin, Salamol)
- Insulin for type 1 diabetic mothers
- Levothyroxine
- Loratadine as medication for hay-fever
- Nasal sprays and drops to treat colds e.g. xylometazoline
- Simple linctus for coughs
- Eye drops for hay fever e.g. sodium cromoglycate.
- Loperamide
- Moisturisers for eczema

Please contact the BfN Drugs in Breastmilk Helpline via the Breastfeeding Network website or on 0844 412 4665 for further information.

Drugs which may not be used by a mother who is donating breastmilk but which are safe for her to continue to breastfeed her own baby

- Mothers who smoke or are currently using Nicotine Replacement
- Antibiotics
- Ibuprofen and other painkillers
- Drugs to treat most conditions see:-

www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/drugs-in-breastmilk-information-and-factsheets.html

If you are considering donating your breastmilk please contact United Kingdom Association of Milk Banking <http://www.ukamb.org> or your local milk bank <http://www.ukamb.org/yourmilkbank.html>

www.ukamb.org



United Kingdom Association
for Milk Banking