

Drugs or Alcohol While Providing Breast Milk →

Drugs, both legal and not legal, are used in informal ways in our society today. These drugs can hurt your baby. When you are providing breast milk, remember that things you eat, drink or inhale can pass to your baby in the breast milk.

Marijuana (pot) should not be used when providing breast milk. If breast milk is used, infants could develop learning problems in school. They also may have increased activity and not be able to pay attention when older. This is known as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder or ADHD. The active chemical in marijuana is tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), which collects in the breast tissue. THC goes into the breast milk for weeks after using marijuana. You will not test positive for THC from secondhand smoke.

Street drugs such as cocaine, PCP, amphetamines (speed), heroin and ecstasy pass to the baby while you are providing breast milk. Street drugs should not be used. A mother's drug use puts her children at risk for poor weight gain, delayed growth and delayed development. It may be medically required to have a drug test done on you or your baby.

Drugs ordered by your doctor may be safe to use when providing breast milk. You need to ask your infant's doctor and/or a lactation consultant about the drug ordered. We want you to tell the medical team about all drugs or alcohol that you are taking. There are some drugs your doctor wants you to take that can be harmful to your baby. Make sure you inform your doctor that you are breastfeeding..

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), women who are giving breast milk for a sick infant should not drink alcohol. Alcohol does not help milk supply.

The AAP also states that mothers offering breast milk should cut back or stop smoking. Smoking has been related to an increase in infant respiratory allergy and SIDS. To reduce the affect of secondhand smoke, smoking should not be around the infant. Smoking can cause a low milk supply and poor weight gain in infants.

The health care team is here to answer your questions. The team is here to support you and your family's goal to give safe nutrition for your baby.

References

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