Breastfeeding: Illness, Surgery & Imaging



When you're breastfeeding and get sick, need surgery, or diagnostic procedures, it's common to receive conflicting advice. Some providers may suggest pumping and dumping milk, and using formula temporarily "just to be safe." This can be overwhelming and disruptive for both you and your baby. The good news though is that there is plenty of current research and expert information about what is recommended and safe.

Breastfeeding when you get sick

For all but a few illnesses, it is recommended to continue breastfeeding when a nursing parent gets sick. Your breast milk contains antibodies that target and fight germs to protect your baby from severe illness or from getting sick at all.

Tips for when you're sick:





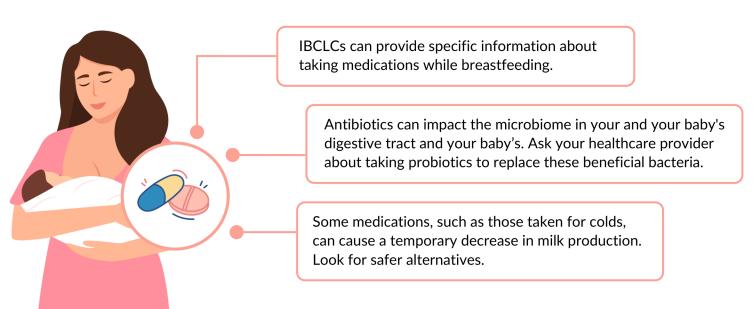




Medicines

Determining the safety of medications during breastfeeding involves several factors. Many medications do not pass into breast milk, or they do so in very small amounts, and are generally considered safe for your baby. A few medications are not recommended or are considered unsafe while breastfeeding.

Learn all you can about how a medication may affect breastfeeding



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Surgery

For parents of healthy term infants, it's generally safe to resume breastfeeding once you are awake, alert, and stable after surgery.



Anesthesia Medications

Anesthesia medications are usually eliminated from your milk within about two hours, just as they are eliminated from your bloodstream.

Opioids

Careful, short term use of opioids for postoperative pain is generally considered safe, but babies should be monitored for any signs of sedation. In general, opioids should be used at the lowest dose and the shortest period of time that provides adequate pain relief.

Imaging

Non-radioactive contrast media used in imaging is generally safe and quickly eliminated, allowing you to continue breastfeeding without interruption.

In general, many nuclear medicine imaging agents do not require breastfeeding interruption, but some might need special attention depending on the situation. It's important to talk to a healthcare professional before getting any imaging done while breastfeeding.



Pro Tip!

There are good resources available to help you feed your baby safely when diagnostic imaging is necessary.

Your Nest IBCLC can provide essential recommendations specifically tailored to Schedule your follow up appointment with your Nest Collaborative IBCLC by



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