

Can I safely breastfeed my baby while on a methadone treatment program?

Yes, mothers can safely breastfeed their babies while being treated with methadone.

IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW MUCH METHADONE YOU'RE TAKING, LESS THAN 1% IS PASSED INTO YOUR BREAST MILK.

The Canadian Pediatric Society and Motherisk say breastfeeding while on methadone is safe! There is NO REASON why you cannot breastfeed your baby while on a methadone treatment.

BENEFITS OF BREASTFEEDING

BABY'S BENEFITS

Helps baby and mom bond.

Breast milk has important nutrients that help the baby grow and prevent infection.

Breastfed babies are healthier than formula fed babies and visit the doctor less often because of sicknesses.

Breastfeeding decreases baby's risk of:

- Ear infections
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
- Developing asthma
- Developing allergies
- Developing certain childhood cancers
- Obesity later in life
- Baby girls' risk of developing breast cancer later in life
- Developing diabetes
- Developing urinary tract infections
- Developing a skin rash known as eczema

MOTHER'S BENEFITS

Breastfeeding can:

- Help protect mom from developing breast, ovarian and uterine cancers
- Help mom's uterus return to normal size
- Help mom lose weight after the baby is born
- Mean more sleep for mom and baby
- Prevent unwanted and too much blood loss in the mother after the baby is born (postpartum hemorrhage)

It is cheaper than formula and always available.

"SHOULD I BREASTFEED EVEN WHEN MY BABY MAY GO THROUGH WITHDRAWAL?"

YES. Breastfeeding your newborn baby will be the best thing you could do to comfort your baby.

NEONATAL ABSTINENCE SYNDROME (NAS)

NAS is when your baby goes through methadone withdrawal after being born because he or she was exposed to methadone throughout your pregnancy.



Your BREAST MILK CAN HELP your baby through withdrawal symptoms.

Some common withdrawal symptoms you could see are:

- Irritability that could cause lack of sleep or problems feeding
- Stuffy nose and sneezing
- Weight loss or weight gain
- Trembling or tremors – even when sleeping
- Pain or discomfort
- Increased crying
- Diarrhea that can cause diaper rash
- Seizures
- Unexplained fever

Breastfeeding cannot prevent NAS, but can comfort your baby.

Breastfeeding and skin-to-skin contact can reduce the harshness of withdrawal symptoms your baby could experience.

FREE SUPPORTIVE RESOURCES



METHADONE AND BREASTFEEDING

LA LECHE LEAGUE

A mother-to-mother support group that meets monthly, led by experienced breastfeeding counselors who also provide telephone support.

Margo 346-8477
Courtney 474-3574
Nancy 251-8707
LLLThunderBay@yahoo.groups.com

HEALTH UNIT

Located at 999 Balmoral Street

- Healthy Babies, Healthy Children Program: Public health nurses provide info to help new mothers. Call (807) 625-8814.
- Breastfeeding Clinic: Meet with a lactation consultant. Call (807) 625-5916

BREASTFEEDING FRIENDS SUPPORT GROUP

Lactation consultants available.

- Best Start Hub Northwood, 110 Sherbrooke Street
1st, 3rd & 5th Tuesday
1:00-3:00pm (Drop in)
- Best Start Hub Red River
160 Algonquin Avenue
2nd & 4th Tuesday
1:00-3:00pm (Drop in)

TELEHEALTH

Nurses on call to answer questions.
Call toll free 1-866-797-0000.

MATERNITY CENTRE BREASTFEEDING CLINIC

- Meet with a lactation consultant, by appointment only
- Birth to 8 weeks
- Call (807) 684-6228

OTHER RESOURCES

MOTHERISK

- Provides information for breastfeeding mothers on safety concerns regarding medication such as methadone, antibiotics, etc.
- Talk to your doctor, nurse practitioner or midwife for more information.
- Call 1-416-813-6780 or visit www.motherisk.org



INFORMATION ON BREASTFEEDING AND METHADONE TREATMENT

999 Balmoral Street, Thunder Bay ON P7B 6E7
Phone: (807) 625-5900 | Toll-free: 1-888-294-6630
TBDHU.COM

