

Cold Medicine and Breastfeeding

While cold medicines containing *pseudoephedrine* are not usually harmful to a breastfeeding baby, studies have shown that **taking medicines that contain pseudoephedrine can cut a mother's milk supply by 40% for 24 hours.**

Many common cold and flu type medicines contain pseudoephedrine as an ingredient, including Sudafed products and most over-the-counter cold medicines that are kept behind the pharmacy counter.

Some formulations of Alka-Seltzer, Coricidin, Robitussin, and Vicks products do not contain pseudoephedrine, but some of them do. It is very important to read all ingredient labels of over-the-counter cold medicines to ensure you choose the one that is right for you.

The ingredients *dextromethorphan*, *guaifenesin*, *chlorpheniramine*, *ibuprofen*, and *acetaminophen*, which are commonly found in cold and flu medicines, are generally regarded as safe for breastfeeding babies and do not affect mom's milk supply.

Many allergy medications, such as Alavert and Claritin, contain *loratadine*. This is considered safe and no effects of a drop in milk supply have been reported. However, be aware of "D" formulations of these drugs, as they often contain pseudoephedrine.

For more information, please contact your physician.

Reference: Hale, TW. Medications in Mothers' Milk, 11th ed. Pharmasoft Publishing; 2004.