Medicines While Nursing

Some medicines you take are secreted in your breast milk. **Most** drugs in breast milk will not harm your baby. **Some medicines are known to cause problems for babies. These medications should not be taken by their mothers while they are breastfeeding. The following is a list of drugs that you should avoid while you are nursing**:

- Amphetamines, Cocaine, Marijuana, Heroin and other illegal drugs.
- Cancer chemotherapy drugs.
- Chloramphenicol antibiotics.
- DES (diethyl stilbestrol).
- Migraine prevention drugs.
- Tagamet (Cimetidine).
- Quinidine and Norpace.
- Lithium carbonate and Parkinson's drugs.
- Phenylbutazone (Butazolidin).
- Thyroid suppression drugs.
- Prozac.
- Radioactive material that you may have received.

Medications of concern but is not known how or if they affect the nursing baby:

- Anti-anxiety medications.
- Antidepressants.
- Anti-psychotic medications.
- Herbal medications.
- Over the counter medications.

Any of these types of medications should be discussed with the baby's caregiver.

In most medical conditions, harm to your baby can be avoided by attention to choice of drug, and timing of dosage. Nursing just before taking a medication helps limit the amount your baby is exposed to. **Remind your caregivers that you are breast-feeding. This helps them choose the safest treatment for you and your baby**.

As is the case with most drugs, very little alcohol comes out in breast milk if your alcohol intake is light. Do not nurse immediately after drinking. Although toxins from cigarette smoke do reach breast milk, a mother who can not stop cigarette smoking should still breast-feed. It is healthier for the baby to breastfeed from a smoking mother than to bottle feed. However, **do not smoke around the baby.** Try to not nurse immediately after smoking. Reduce the number of cigarettes you smoke as much as possible.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- Contact the National Women's Health Information Center (NWHIC) at 800-994-9662.
- Web site: Physicians Drug Reference: http://www.drugs.com/druginformation.html.

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