

Breastfeeding and Medication



Mirtazapine and breastfeeding

Compatible with use during breastfeeding from limited studies but care should be taken with co-sleeping and the baby observed for drowsiness.

Brand name: Zispin®

Mirtazapine may be initiated if other antidepressants have proved ineffective or have not been tolerated.

It is structurally dissimilar to SSRIs and tricyclic antidepressants. It produces fewer symptoms of the sexual dysfunction that have been reported in SSRIs.

It can initially cause drowsiness and abnormal dreams.

Kristensen et al. (2007) collected plasma and milk samples from eight breast-feeding women with babies of average age 6.3 months, taking a median dose of 38 mg mirtazapine per day (30–120 mg daily). No adverse effects were seen in the infants and mirtazapine was detected in only one infant (1.5 microgramme per litre) but negative by 12 hours post dose (Klier et al. 2007). The authors concluded that mirtazapine use by lactating women is safe for the breast-fed infant.

Hale (2017 online access) reports that it is only 50% orally bioavailable and that the relative infant dose is 1.6%–6.3%.

The BNF notes that mirtazapine is present in milk and that it should be used only if potential benefit outweighs risk.

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