



Hayfever and breastfeeding

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Symptoms of hayfever

- › sneezing
- › a runny or blocked nose
- › itchy, red or watery eyes
- › Despite being so common the symptoms can make you feel, tired, miserable and uncomfortable
- › The patient information leaflet of most products says that the drugs can't be taken during breastfeeding. This isn't true. It is just that the manufacturer isn't taking responsibility. Pharmacists may refuse to sell the products based on this.





Preferred treatment

- › No sedating antihistamines – **loratadine** (Clarityn[®]) and **cetirizine** (Zirtek[®]) which are licensed for children from the age of two at half the adult dose
- › Nasal sprays which act locally in the nose and will not pass into milk in significant quantities eg **beclomethasone**, **fluticasone**, **mometasone**, **triamcinolone** (Beconase[®], Flixonase[®], Mometasone, Nasocort[®])
- › Eye drops which act locally to control symptoms in the eye and don't pass into milk in significant levels – **sodium cromoglycate** (Opticrom[®])



Other antihistamines

- › **Fexofenadine**: non sedating drug. Relative infant dose 0.5-0.7% well below the 10% level regarded as compatible with breastfeeding
- › **Acrivastin** (Benadryl relief[®]) can cause drowsiness in mother and baby. As there is less research it is the least favoured option unless it is the only drug that the mother finds effective. In such a situation the baby should be observed for drowsiness.

Sedating antihistamines

- › **Chlorpheniramine** (Piriton[®]) – acceptable short term but can cause drowsiness in the nursing and lower milk supply. Avoid if possible
- › **Promethazine** (Phenergan[®]) - acceptable short term but can cause drowsiness in the nursing and lower milk supply. Avoid if possible



Non drug treatments for hayfever

- put Vaseline around your nostrils to trap pollen.
- wear wraparound sunglasses to stop pollen getting into your eyes.
- shower and change your clothes after you have been outside to wash pollen off.
- stay indoors whenever possible.
- keep windows and doors shut as much as possible.
- Local honey is also said to help

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/hay-fever/>





References

- › Jones W Breastfeeding and Medication (Routledge 2018)
- › Jones W Breastfeeding and Chronic Medical Conditions (Kindle 2020)
- › Hale TW Medications and Mother's Milk
- › LactMed <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK501922/>
- › Ito S, Blajchman A, Stephenson M, Eliopoulos C, Koren G, Prospective follow-up of adverse reactions in breastfed infants exposed to maternal medication, Am J Obstet Gynecol, 1993;168:1393–9.

