For Nursing Mothers, Most Prescription Meds Are Safe

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Breast-feeding mothers can take most prescription drugs without risking the health of their newborns, said the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) in its first official statement on the topic in nearly 12 years, reports The Wall Street Journal.

AAP experts cited a new study published in the journal Pediatrics that found most drugs don't get into breast milk in levels that are high enough to affect an infant's overall health. What's more, researchers said that the risks associated with stopping breast-feeding too early in a child's life were usually far greater than the potential risks from prescription meds moms may use while nursing.

"The tendency among practitioners is to say, 'I don't know the answer—therefore, why don't you stop breast-feeding,'" said Ruth Lawrence, MD, a nursing expert at the University of Rochester Medical Center. She added that some drugs still remain inadvisable to take while breast-feeding.

Such drugs include codeine, hydrocodone and oxycodone. In addition, doctors recommend that moms do not take certain antidepressants, antipsychotics, substance abuse treatment drugs and any herbal supplements, in particular the aphrodisiac yohimbe. (This herb reportedly caused death in children.) What's more, doctors also warned that the herb St. John's Wort might cause colic and lethargy in breast-fed infants.

Currently, the most comprehensive, up-to-date information about breast-feeding and medications can be found on a National Institutes of Health database called LactMed. The database is available as an app for mobile devices, or just click here.

For more information about the health benefits of breast-feeding, click here.

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http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/breastfeeding-prescription-meds-24481-4791