



## Nipple Piercing

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### Drug Levels and Effects

#### Summary of Use during Lactation

Although controlled studies have not been performed, piercing of the nipples seems to not interfere with lactation in most cases,[1,2] although poor latching, and milk leakage from the infant's mouth have been reported.[3] Some breast jewelry may pierce the areola as well as the nipple. Reversible hyperprolactinemia and galactorrhea occurred in two individuals who developed infections of the nipple and mastitis. Infections are estimated to occur after 10% to 20% of nipple piercings. Healing time after nipple piercing is 6 to 12 months, and up to a year longer if infection or trauma occur. Occasionally, mastitis occurs after piercing.[4] A theoretical concern is aspiration of the nipple jewelry by the nursing infant and injury of the infant's mouth and gums. Although these complications apparently have not been reported, nipple jewelry should be removed before nursing,[3,5,6] and preferably during the entire duration of breastfeeding.[7]

#### Effects in Breastfed Infants

Relevant published information was not found as of the revision date.

#### Effects on Lactation and Breastmilk

Nipple piercing has caused mastitis in nursing and nonnursing women and at least one man.[3,6,8,9] In some of these patients, hyperprolactinemia and galactorrhea resulted. After removal of the jewelry and treatment of mastitis, hyperprolactinemia and galactorrhea subsided.[8,9] However, in a study of 11 individuals who had pierced nipples for an average of 4 years (range 2.5 to 12 years) without mastitis, serum prolactin values were in the normal range.[10] Nipple piercing has also been associated with decreased lactation in nursing mothers caused by duct obstruction and milk leakage through the piercing tract.[1,3]

#### References

1. Garbin CP, Deacon JP, Rowan MK, et al. Association of nipple piercing with abnormal milk production and breastfeeding. *JAMA*. 2009;301:2550–1. PubMed PMID: 19549971.
2. Armstrong ML, Caliendo C, Roberts AE. Pregnancy, lactation and nipple piercings. *AWHONN Lifelines*. 2006;10:212–7. PubMed PMID: 16792708.

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5. Kluger N. Body art and pregnancy. *Eur J Obstet Gynecol Reprod Biol*. 2010;153:3–7. PubMed PMID: 20557995.
6. Martin J. Is nipple piercing compatible with breastfeeding? *J Hum Lact*. 2004;20:319–21. PubMed PMID: 15296586.
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9. Demirtas Y, Sariguney Y, Cukurluoglu O, et al. Nipple piercing: It is wiser to avoid in patients with hyperprolactinemia. *Dermatol Surg*. 2004;30:1184. PubMed PMID: 15274719.
10. Sun GE, Pantalone KM, Gupta M, et al. Is chronic nipple piercing associated with hyperprolactinemia? *Pituitary*. 2013;16:351–3. PubMed PMID: 22965248.

## Substance Identification

### Substance Name

Nipple Piercing

### Drug Class

Breast Feeding

Lactation

Body Modification, Non-Therapeutic