



Abatacept

Revised: January 15, 2024.

CASRN: 332348-12-6

Drug Levels and Effects

Summary of Use during Lactation

Abatacept is a large fusion protein that interferes with T-cell activation. It has a molecular weight of 92,000, so only small amounts are expected to enter breastmilk and absorbed by the infant.[1] One case report indicates that amounts in milk are very low and do not appear to affect the breastfed infant. Waiting for at least 2 weeks postpartum to resume therapy may minimize transfer to the infant.[2] Some professional guidelines consider abatacept to be acceptable during breastfeeding.[3,4] However, until more information is available an alternate drug may be preferred, especially while nursing a newborn or preterm infant.

Drug Levels

Maternal Levels. A woman with rheumatoid arthritis resumed weekly doses of abatacept 125 mg subcutaneously 2 days after delivery. Maternal serum and breastmilk samples were obtained after the 9th and 10th doses. Peak abatacept concentrations in milk occurred at about 3 days after each dose at 256 mcg/L. Prior to the next dose, the trough concentration was 170 mcg/L. The authors estimated the daily infant dose to be between 25 and 38 mcg/kg, which translates into a weight-adjusted percent of maternal dosage of 1 to 1.5% (median 1.3%).[5]

Two lactating women who were receiving abatacept for rheumatoid arthritis donated milk samples for analysis. The first, who was receiving a subcutaneous dose of 125 mg once weekly, had a peak milk level of about 200 mcg/L at 3 days after the dose and a level of about 100 mcg/L at 7 days after the dose. The second, who was receiving an intravenous dose of 500 mg every 2 weeks, had a peak milk level of about 100 mcg/L at 3 days after the dose and a level of about 50 mcg/L at 7 days after the dose.[6]

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

Effects in Breastfed Infants

A woman with rheumatoid arthritis resumed weekly doses of abatacept 125 mg subcutaneously 2 days after delivery. Her infant was exclusively breastfed, reportedly up until 12 months of age. Her infant had no adverse

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effects and developed normally during this time. She also received routine childhood vaccinations at 3 months of age as well as rotavirus and BCG vaccination at 6 months of age. No infections or adverse immune reactions were seen following the vaccinations.[5]

Effects on Lactation and Breastmilk

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

Alternate Drugs to Consider

(Rheumatoid Arthritis) [Adalimumab](#), [Certolizumab Pegol](#), [Etanercept](#), [Infliximab](#), [Tocilizumab](#)

References

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Substance Identification

Substance Name

Abatacept

CAS Registry Number

332348-12-6

Drug Class

Breast Feeding

Lactation

Milk, Human

Antirheumatic Agents