



Betony

Revised: February 15, 2021.

Drug Levels and Effects

Summary of Use during Lactation

Betony (*Stachys* species) is the name given to a group of plants from the genus *Stachys* that contain tannins and flavonoid glycosides. It has been used as a nerve tonic to treat anxiety and headaches, an astringent to treat diarrhea, and as a gargle for mouth and throat irritations. Betony is a purported galactagogue; however, no scientifically valid clinical trials support this use. Galactagogues should never replace evaluation and counseling on modifiable factors that affect milk production.[1,2] No data exist on the excretion of any components of betony into breastmilk. Because of a general lack of safety data, betony should be avoided during breastfeeding.

Dietary supplements do not require extensive pre-marketing approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Manufacturers are responsible to ensure the safety, but do not need to *prove* the safety and effectiveness of dietary supplements before they are marketed. Dietary supplements may contain multiple ingredients, and differences are often found between labeled and actual ingredients or their amounts. A manufacturer may contract with an independent organization to verify the quality of a product or its ingredients, but that does *not* certify the safety or effectiveness of a product. Because of the above issues, clinical testing results on one product may not be applicable to other products. More detailed information [about dietary supplements](#) is available elsewhere on the LactMed Web site.

Drug Levels

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

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

Effects in Breastfed Infants

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

Disclaimer: Information presented in this database is not meant as a substitute for professional judgment. You should consult your healthcare provider for breastfeeding advice related to your particular situation. The U.S. government does not warrant or assume any liability or responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of the information on this Site.

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Effects on Lactation and Breastmilk

Older studies performed in Eastern Europe by one group of researchers claim that betony extract can increase milk supply and the protein content of breastmilk.[3-5] No modern, well-controlled studies were found as of the revision date.

References

1. Brodribb W. ABM Clinical Protocol #9. Use of galactogogues in initiating or augmenting maternal milk production, second revision 2018. *Breastfeed Med.* 2018;13:307–14. PubMed PMID: 29902083.
2. Breastfeeding challenges: ACOG Committee Opinion, Number 820. *Obstet Gynecol.* 2021;137:e42–e53. PubMed PMID: 33481531.
3. Bakhalova NV, Kharmats DA. [Effect of the milk from mothers receiving methylergometrine and hedge nettle extract on the physical development of the newborn infant]. *Zdravookhranenie Kirgizii* 1977:28-31. PMID: 17972
4. Aronova BN, Stegailo EA. [Effect of an extract of *Betonica officinalis* on lactation]. *Akush Ginekol (Sofia)* 1977:68-9. PMID: 557295
5. Stegailo EA, Lebedeva IM, Aronova BN, et al. [Treatment of hypogalactia with an extract of the betonical hedge nettle]. *Akush Ginekol (Sofia)* 1980:19-20. PMID: 7369474

Substance Identification

Substance Name

Betony

Scientific Name

Stachys sp.

Drug Class

Breast Feeding

Lactation

Complementary Therapies

Phytotherapy

Plants, Medicinal