

Breast Milk and Contrast Media

**Is it safe to breastfeed my baby
after my Medical Imaging test?**

Yes!



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Medical Imaging

Your doctor or nurse practitioner has ordered a medical imaging test that requires you to have an injection of contrast media.

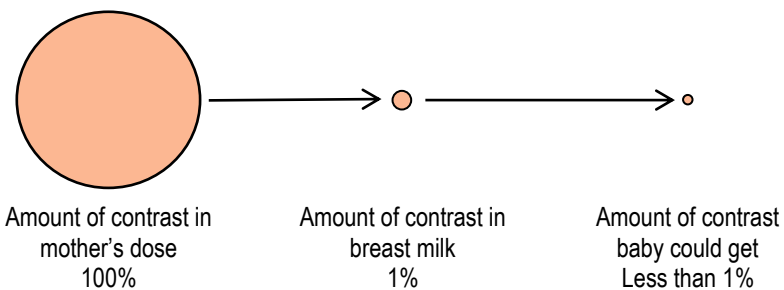
While it is possible that tiny amounts of contrast media can enter breast milk, we want you to know that **it is safe to continue to breast feed your baby.**

Breast Milk and Contrast Media

Contrast media is a solution used during imaging tests such as CT scans or other x-ray procedures. It helps us to see blood vessels and organs like the heart, brain, liver, kidneys, and bowel.

We usually inject contrast media through a needle into a vein in your arm. Some people might already have an intravenous or central venous catheter in place. In many cases, we can use these to inject the contrast media too.

The molecules of contrast media are very large and cannot enter breast milk easily. This means that very little contrast media collects in breast milk. In most cases, less than 1% of the contrast media enters breast milk. Even less gets to the baby.



Removing contrast media from your body

The contrast media is naturally removed by your kidneys. It leaves your body through your urine (pee). Almost all of the contrast media is gone from your body within 11 to 24 hours.

Ask any of us who were involved in your test what type of contrast media was used. The time it takes contrast media to be removed from your body is listed here.

Contrast we used for your test today:

Name of Contrast	Time it takes
<input type="checkbox"/> Omnipaque™	24 hours
<input type="checkbox"/> Visipaque™	14 hours
<input type="checkbox"/> Isovue™	14 hours
<input type="checkbox"/> Optiray™	11 hours

Breastfeeding after your test

We encourage you to return to breastfeeding as soon as possible. Please know that the benefits of breastfeeding far outweigh the possible side effects to your baby.

Benefits of breastfeeding:

- ✓ Protect your milk supply.
- ✓ Protect your baby from infection and disease.
- ✓ Help you and your baby recover after birth.
- ✓ Promote a strong emotional bond with your baby.

Some women might be worried about how the contrast media could affect their baby. The chance of your baby having any side effects of the contrast media is very low. While side effects and allergic reactions are possible, there are no known cases of this in breastfed babies.

Rare but possible side effects your baby might have:

- sick to their stomach
- stomach cramps
- loose bowel movements (diarrhea).

Reducing your baby's exposure to contrast media

Here are some ways you can reduce your baby's exposure to contrast media.

- If you know about your test in advance, you might want to pump and refrigerate (or freeze) breast milk ahead of time. Use this milk to feed your baby after the test.
- If you don't know about your test in advance, you could take a short break from breastfeeding for as long as it takes the contrast media to leave your body. During this time, pump as often as you feed your baby and throw away what you pump.

If you have questions...

While in hospital:

- Speak with your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist on the unit.

When you are home:

- Speak to your healthcare provider (doctor, midwife, or nurse practitioner).
- Contact your local Public Health Unit.
- Call HealthLinkBC at 8-1-1. Open 24 hours.

For more information on breastfeeding

Healthy Families BC
healthyfamiliesbc.ca

Search 'starting to breastfeed'

Or scan this QR code



BC Women's Hospital
bcwomens.ca

Search 'feeding your baby'

Or scan this QR code



Fraser Health
fraserhealth.ca

Search 'breastfeeding'

Or scan this QR code



Vancouver Coastal Health
parenting.vch.ca

Search or click on 'Breastfeeding'

Or scan this QR code



www.fraserhealth.ca • www.providencehealthcare.org
www.phsa.ca • www.vch.ca

This information does not replace the advice given to you by your healthcare provider.