



Goldenseal

Revised: May 17, 2021.

CASRN: 84603-60-1

Drug Levels and Effects

Summary of Use during Lactation

Goldenseal (*Hydrastis canadensis*) root contains berberine and other isoquinoline alkaloids. Goldenseal has traditionally been used as an anti-infective both systemically and topically, although high-quality studies of its efficacy and safety are lacking. It has also been used to mask illicit drugs in the urine, although it appears to be ineffective with modern laboratory methods. Goldenseal has been used topically by nursing mothers to treat sore nipples.[1] No data exist on the excretion of any components of goldenseal into breastmilk or on the safety and efficacy of goldenseal in nursing mothers. Berberine can displace bilirubin from serum albumin, causing concern about exposure of newborn infants, because bilirubin can build up in the infant's brain, causing brain damage. However, the extent of berberine's passage from the mother to the infant is unknown. Most sources recommend avoiding exposure of neonates to goldenseal via breastfeeding or otherwise.[2-4]

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.

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 in Breastfed Infants

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

Effects on Lactation and Breastmilk

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

References

1. Fleiss P. Herbal remedies for the breastfeeding mother. *Mothering* 1988;Summer:68-71.
2. Amir LH, Pirotta MV, Raval M. Breastfeeding - Evidence based guidelines for the use of medicines. *Aust Fam Physician*. 2011;40:684–90. PubMed PMID: 21894275.
3. O'Hara M, Kiefer D, Farrell K, et al. A review of 12 commonly used medicinal herbs. *Arch Fam Med*. 1998;7:523–36. PubMed PMID: 9821826.
4. Yarnell E. Botanical medicine in pregnancy and lactation. *Altern Complement Ther*. 1997;3(April):93–100.

Substance Identification

Substance Name

Goldenseal

Scientific Name

Hydrastis canadensis

CAS Registry Number

84603-60-1

Drug Class

Breast Feeding

Lactation

Complementary Therapies

Phytotherapy

Plants, Medicinal