



Parsley

Revised: February 15, 2021.

Drug Levels and Effects

Summary of Use during Lactation

Parsley (*Carum petroselinum*) leaf, seed, and root contain the volatile oils apiol and myristicin, which is pharmacologically active, as well as flavonoids, beta-phellandrene, bergapten, and vitamins A and C. Warm compresses or poultices of parsley have been used to treat breast engorgement and mastalgia.[1,2] Oral capsules containing sage and parsley capsules are said to decrease milk flow; however, no scientifically valid clinical trials support this use. Some mothers in Turkey reportedly use parsley to increase their milk supply.[3] Galactogogues should never replace evaluation and counseling on modifiable factors that affect milk production.[4,5] No data exist on the excretion of any components of parsley into breastmilk or on the safety and efficacy of parsley nursing mothers or infants. Parsley is "generally recognized as safe" (GRAS) as a food by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Adverse reactions are primarily allergic, including cross reactions to other members of the Apiaceae family, such as carrot, celery, and fennel. The essential oil should not be used because of potential toxicity of its apiol and myristicin content.

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

Oral capsules containing sage and parsley capsules are said to decrease milk flow;[6-8] however, no scientifically valid clinical trials support this use.

One hundred fifty-eight mothers in Iran of who reported difficulty in breastfeeding were given either a proprietary mixture of herbs (Shirafza Drop) or a chlorophyll solution as a placebo. The herbal mixture contained the purported galactogogues fennel, anise, cumin, black seed, and parsley. Infant ages ranged between 0 and 6 months and they were exclusively breastfed. Weight gain of the infants was measured over time. No difference in infant weight gain was seen between the two groups of infants.[9] Blinding and randomization in this study is unclear.

References

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Substance Identification

Substance Name

Parsley

Scientific Name

Carum petroselinum

Drug Class

Breast Feeding

Lactation

Complementary Therapies

Phytotherapy

Plants, Medicinal