



Appalachian bunchflower

Revised: January 15, 2023.

Drug Levels and Effects

Summary of Use during Lactation

Appalachian bunchflower (*Veratrum parviflorum*) found in the Southeastern United States that contains several cardiotoxic alkaloids, such as cyclopamine, jervine, veratramine. It has no known use in lactation. A woman who mistakenly ate Appalachian bunchflower had veratramine and cyclopamine in her milk, although the toxicological significance of their presence in milk for the breastfed infant is unknown.

Drug Levels

Maternal Levels. A nursing mother developed nausea and vomiting approximately 2 hours after ingestion of approximately one tablespoon of cooked *Veratrum parviflorum*. She had sinus bradycardia with heart rate of 56, with incomplete right bundle branch block. After discharge from the emergency department, she provided 4 milk samples. The initial sample contained 405 mcg/L of veratramine. About 5 hours later, the milk concentration was 136 mcg/L and about 15.5 hours later on the next morning, the milk sample contained 303 mcg/L of veratramine. In a final milk sample 9 hours later, veratramine was undetectable (<44 mcg/L). The cyclopamine concentration of cyclopamine was above the limit of detection (11 mcg/L), but below but below the limit of quantification (32 mcg/L) in all samples.[1]

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

Effects in Breastfed Infants

A nursing mother ingested one tablespoon of cooked *Veratrum parviflorum*. She had detectable levels of veratramine and cyclopamine in her milk, but no adverse effects were reported in her infant. The extent of nursing after the ingestion was not reported.[1]

Effects on Lactation and Breastmilk

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

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References

1. Seale JT, Carpenter JE, Eisenstat MD, et al. *Veratrum parviflorum* poisoning: Identification of steroidal alkaloids in patient blood and breast milk. *Clin Toxicol (Phila)*. 2022;60:1309–17. PubMed PMID: 36301078.

Substance Identification

Substance Name

Appalachian bunchflower

Scientific Name

Veratrum parviflorum

Drug Class

Breast Feeding

Lactation

Milk, Human

False Hellbores