

INFORMATION SHEET

Breastfeeding after a scan



This factsheet provides information about the intravenous contrast mediums (imaging dyes) that might be used during your CT, MRI, or VQ scan. It will help you understand how these contrast mediums might affect breastfeeding and give you advice on expressing milk before and after your scan, so you can make informed choices for you and your baby.

Contrast agents are usually put into your vein through a small tube called a cannula, but sometimes they can be taken by mouth.

VQ (Ventilation Perfusion) Scan, Technetium Macroaggregated Albumin 99m (Tc-99m MAA)

It is recommended that you do not breastfeed your baby for 12 hours following the scan. During this time, you should express your breastmilk as often as baby would usually breastfeed and discard it. If you do not wish to discard the expressed breastmilk, you can store it in the refrigerator and feed it to your baby after 60 hours.

After 12 hours, you can re-commence breastfeeding.

Expressing breast milk before the scan may help avoid infant formula supplementation.

Your baby will receive a small amount of radiation exposure when you hold them in the hours following the scan. There is no need for you to be separated from your baby, however you can reduce this radiation exposure by spending less time holding your baby in the hours following the scan. Please contact the Nuclear Medicine Department if you would like more information.

Other Nuclear Medicine studies

Nuclear medicine studies can involve a range of radiopharmaceuticals, some of which might enter your breast milk.

Before you receive any radiopharmaceutical, please inform nuclear medicine staff that you are breastfeeding. Appropriate advice will be given to you about breastfeeding or if there is any need to limit the time you spend with your baby for a short while after the scan.

CT (Computerised Tomography) scan

Most radiopaque contrast mediums (which may also be called contrast or dye) contain iodine.

According to the 'Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiology' and 'LactMed', there is no need to stop breastfeeding after receiving an iodine-based contrast medium as less than 1% of the iodine-based dye is present in your breast milk within the first 24 hours.

Breastfeeding may continue as usual.

The following contrast mediums in the table on the next page contain iodine. Ask your radiographer to tick the type of contrast (IV injection) you have been given.

\checkmark	CT Contrast (containing iodine)
	Optiray 320 & 350 (ioversol)
	Ultravist 300 (iopromide)
	Urografin 30% (amidotrizoate)
	Gastrografin (ambidotrizoate)
	Omnipaque (iohexol)
	Visipaque (iodixanol)
	loscan (diatrizoate)
	Biliscopin (iotroxate)

Cholangiography and Cholecystography

Biliscopin (meglumine iotroxate) is an iodinated contrast agent used for Cholangiography and Cholecystigraphy.

This contrast agent may take time to leave your body. You should discuss breastfeeding arrangements with a radiologist and your referring doctor before receiving this contrast agent.

MRI scan and breastfeeding

Gadolinium-based contrast mediums are used in MRI scans as it makes the images clearer. The following medicines are gadolinium containing contrast mediums.

Ask your radiographer to tick the IV injection that was used during your procedure.

\checkmark	MRI Contrast
	Dotarem (gadoteric acid)
	Gadovist (godobutrol)
	MultiHance (gadobenate)
	Primovist (gadoxetate)

There is no need to stop breastfeeding after receiving the above gadolinium based contrast medications.

If you have any further concerns about breastfeeding after your scan, discuss with your doctor, radiologist, or contact:

Mothersafe: Medications in Pregnancy and Lactation Service Phone: (02) 9382 6539 (Sydney Metropolitan) or 1800 647 848 Web: www.mothersafe.org.au

References

- 1. InsideRadiology. Galoinium Contrast Medium. Sydney: The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists; 2017. Available from https://www.insideradiology.com.au/gadolinium-contrast-medium-hp/ accessed November 2024.
- 2. ABM Clinical Protocol #31: Radiology and Nuclear Medicine Studies in Lactation Women Breastfeeding Medicine. Volume 14, Number 5, 2019. Available from https://www.bfmed.org/assets/DOCUMENTS/PROTOCOLS/Protocol%20%2331%20 -%20English%20Translation.pdf accessed November 2024
- 3. American College of Radiology. ACR Committee on Drugs and Contrast Media. Available from https://www.acr.org/-/media/ ACR/Files/Clinical-Resources/Contrast_Media.pdf
- 4. Hale's Medications and Mothers' Milk. Radioisotopes in lactation. Available from https://www.halesmeds.com/appendices/55553
- 5. Technetium Tc 99m Albumin Aggregated. (2023). In Drugs and Lactation Database (LactMed®). National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.
- 6. Western Sydney Local Health District. Breastfeeding after an MRI or CT Scan. Available from: https://www.wslhd.health.nsw. gov.au/ArticleDocuments/1122/Breastfeeding%20after%20MRI%20CT%20scans%20V4_21-05-2019.pdf.aspx. Accessed on 3 March 2025.

Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District

PO Box 63 Penrith NSW 2751 **Telephone:** (02) 4734 2000 Fax: (02) 4734 3737 Email: NBMLHD-mail@health.nsw.gov.au YouTube: Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District

Web: www.nsw.gov.au/health/nbmlhd Facebook: www.facebook.com/NBMLHD Instagram: instagram.com/nepeanbluemountains Twitter: @NBMLHD

© Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District. This work is copyright. It may be produced in whole or in part for study or training purposes subject to the inclusion of acknowledgment of the source and no commercial usage or sale. Reproduction for purposes other than those indicated requires permission from Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District.