

U.S. National Library of Medicine National Center for Biotechnology Information **NLM Citation:** Drugs and Lactation Database (LactMed) [Internet]. Bethesda (MD): National Library of Medicine (US); 2006-. Varicella Vaccine. [Updated 2018 Oct 31]. **Bookshelf URL:** https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/



# Varicella Vaccine

Revised: October 31, 2018.

# **Drug Levels and Effects**

#### Summary of Use during Lactation

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the several health professional organizations state that vaccines given to a nursing mother do not affect the safety of breastfeeding for mothers or infants and that breastfeeding is not a contraindication to varicella vaccine. Breastfeed infants should be vaccinated according to the routine recommended schedules.[1][2][3]

#### **Drug Levels**

*Maternal Levels.* Two postpartum women immunized with varicella vaccine provided preimmunization and serial postimmunization breastmilk samples (number not specified). One sample of colostrum contained detectable viral DNA and B-actin by polymerase chain reaction, but all other samples were negative for these species. No varicella gene sequences were found in any of the samples.[4]

One study of 12 women vaccinated with live, attenuated varicella vaccine found no evidence of varicella virus excretion into breastmilk.[5]

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

# **Effects in Breastfed Infants**

Limited data indicate that breastfeeding can enhance the response of the infant to certain vaccine antigens.[1][3] [6]

### **Effects on Lactation and Breastmilk**

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

### References

- 1. General recommendations on immunization --- recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). MMWR Recomm Rep. 2011;60 (RR-2):1-64. PubMed PMID: 21293327.
- 2. Gruslin A, Steben M, Halperin S et al. Immunization in pregnancy: No. 220, December 2008. Int J Gynaecol Obstet. 2009;105:187-91. PubMed PMID: 19367691.

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- 3. American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Infectious Diseases, Kimberlin DW, Brady MT et al. Red Book: 2015 Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases. 30th ed. Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics. 2015.
- 4. Dolbear GL, Moffat J, Falkner C, Wojtowycz M. A pilot study: Is attenuated varicella virus present in breast milk after postpartum immunization? Obstet Gynecol. 2003;101 (4 Suppl):47s. Abstract.
- 5. Bohlke K, Galil K, Jackson LA et al. Postpartum varicella vaccination: is the vaccine virus excreted in breast milk? Obstet Gynecol. 2003;102:970-7. PubMed PMID: 14672472.
- 6. Pabst HF. Immunomodulation by breast-feeding. Pediatr Infect Dis J. 1997;16:991-5. PubMed PMID: 9380478.

## **Substance Identification**

#### **Substance Name**

Varicella Vaccine

#### **Drug Class**

Breast Feeding

Lactation

Vaccines