



Aloe

Revised: December 3, 2018.

CASRN: 8001-97-6

Drug Levels and Effects

Summary of Use during Lactation

Aloe vera gel consists of the clear gel from the center of fresh leaves of Aloe vera and related aloes. Active ingredients include mono- and polysaccharides (e.g., acemannan, glucomannan), allantoin, enzymes (e.g., cyclooxygenase, amylase, lipase, alkaline phosphatase, carboxypeptidase), and salicylic acid. It should not be confused with Aloe latex which comes from the inner portion of the skin and contains potent anthraquinone laxatives. Aloe vera gel has been used topically on the nipples during nursing to help heal cracked nipples. In a randomized, single-blinded study (investigators blinded), aloe vera was more effective than lanolin in decreasing nipple pain score after 7 days in women with sore nipples postpartum.[1] Another study compared breastmilk alone applied to the nipples after breastfeeding to either olive oil or aloe vera gel. All had less pain after 7 days of nursing, but the decrease on pain was greater with aloe vera than with the other treatments.[2] Topical aloe has also been combined with a cactus leaf preparation and massage to treat engorgement.[3]

If aloe vera is applied to the nipples, it should be washed off before nursing the infant because the taste might adversely affect nursing or cause diarrhea in the infant.[4][5] No data exist on the safety and efficacy of Aloe vera gel in nursing mothers or infants. Aloe vera gel has caused itching, burning, and allergic contact dermatitis, possibly from contamination with the irritating latex from the leaves.[6][7] Aloe vera gel also has an antiplatelet effect and can enhance the antiplatelet effect of other drugs. Aloe latex, the laxative, should not be used during breastfeeding.[8][9]

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.

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 .

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.

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

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3. Meng S, Deng Q, Feng C et al. Effects of massage treatment combined with topical cactus and aloe on puerperal milk stasis. Breast Dis. 2015;35:173-8. PubMed PMID: 25881639.
4. Yarnell E. Botanical medicine in pregnancy and lactation. Altern Complement Ther. 1997;3 (April):93-100.
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6. Barankin B, Gross MS. Nipple and areolar eczema in the breastfeeding woman. J Cutan Med Surg. 2004;8:126-30. PubMed PMID: 15129318.
7. De Smet PA. Health risks of herbal remedies: an update. Clin Pharmacol Ther. 2004;76:1-17. PubMed PMID: 15229459.
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Substance Identification

Substance Name

Aloe

Scientific Name

Aloe vera

CAS Registry Number

8001-97-6

Drug Class

Breast Feeding

Lactation

Complementary Therapies

Phytotherapy

Plants, Medicinal