



Oregano

Revised: December 3, 2018.

Drug Levels and Effects

Summary of Use during Lactation

Oregano (*Origanum vulgare*) leaves and oil contain carvacrol, thymol, eugenol and rosmarinic acid. Oregano has been used in medicinal doses for respiratory and gastrointestinal disorders and as an antimicrobial. Oregano oil has been advocated as a treatment for lactation-related *Candida* infection of the nipples;^[1] however, no clinical studies have confirmed the safety or efficacy of this use. No data exist on the excretion of any components of oregano into breastmilk or on the safety and efficacy of oregano in nursing mothers or infants. Oregano and oregano oil are "generally recognized as safe" (GRAS) as food ingredients by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Oregano is generally well tolerated, but gastrointestinal upset and allergic skin reactions have been reported rarely. Because of a lack of data, oregano in amounts higher than those found in foods as a flavoring should probably be avoided during breastfeeding.

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.

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

1. Jacobsen PJ. Candida versus breastfeeding--which is winning? *Midwifery Today Int Midwife*. 2009;26-7, 66. PubMed PMID: 19627056.

Substance Identification

Substance Name

Oregano

Scientific Name

Origanum vulgare

Drug Class

Breast Feeding

Lactation

Complementary Therapies

Food

Phytotherapy

Plants, Medicinal