



## Betony

Revised: December 3, 2018.

## Drug Levels and Effects

### Summary of Use during Lactation

Betony (*Stachys* sp.) is the name given to a group of plants from the genus *Stachys* that contain tannins and flavonoid glycosides. It has been used as a nerve tonic to treat anxiety and headaches, an astringent to treat diarrhea, and as a gargle for mouth and throat irritations. Betony is a purported galactagogue; however, no scientifically valid clinical trials support this use. Galactagogues should never replace evaluation and counseling on modifiable factors that affect milk production.[1] No data exist on the excretion of any components of betony into breastmilk. Because of a general lack of safety data, betony should 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

Older studies performed in Eastern Europe claim that betony extract can increase milk supply and the protein content of breastmilk.[2][3][4] No modern, well-controlled studies were found as of the revision date.

## References

1. Brodribb W. ABM Clinical Protocol #9: Use of galactogogues in initiating or augmenting maternal milk production, second revision 2018. *Breastfeed Med.* 2018;13:307-14. PubMed PMID: 29902083.
2. Bakhalova NV, Kharmats DA. [Effect of the milk from mothers receiving methylergometrine and hedge nettle extract on the physical development of the newborn infant]. *Zdravookhranenie Kirgizii.* 1977;28-31. PubMed PMID: 17972.
3. Aronova BN, Stegailo EA. [Effect of an extract of *Betonica officinalis* on lactation]. *Akush Ginekol (Sofia).* 1977;68-9. PubMed PMID: 557295.
4. Stegailo EA, Lebedeva IM, Aronova BN et al. [Treatment of hypogalactia with an extract of the betonical hedge nettle]. *Akush Ginekol (Sofia).* 1980;19-20. PubMed PMID: 7369474.

## Substance Identification

### Substance Name

Betony

### Scientific Name

*Stachys* sp.

### Drug Class

Breast Feeding

Lactation

Complementary Therapies

Phytotherapy

Plants, Medicinal



