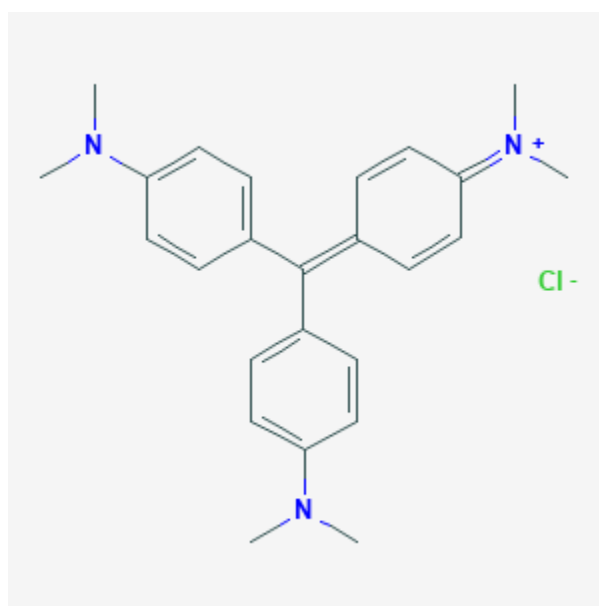




## Gentian Violet

Revised: December 3, 2018.

CASRN: 548-62-9



## Drug Levels and Effects

### Summary of Use during Lactation

Gentian violet (crystal violet) was used in the past to treat oral and nipple thrush during breastfeeding. Gentian violet is potentially toxic to the mucous membranes, causing ulceration,[1][2][3][4] and potentially tattooing the skin. It can also interact with DNA[5], is carcinogenic and mutagenic in rodents, and occasionally causes allergic sensitization, with cross reactions to other triphenylmethane dyes.[6] Its use has been severely curtailed by authorities in England and Australia.[7][8] It is also very messy, staining skin and clothing. A 2001 survey of the members of the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine (ABM) found that gentian violet is rarely (1 to 2% of respondents) used by breastfeeding experts for initial treatment of oral thrush and is very infrequently (3 to 4% of respondents) used for recurrent or persistent thrush.[9] ABM guidelines for treating Candida infection of the nipples state that an aqueous solution of gentian violet of less than 0.5% can be used for no more than 7 days on the nipple.[10] However, safer alternatives for treating thrush are available.[11]

**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 .

## Effects in Breastfed Infants

Gentian violet has caused oral ulceration in breastfed infants treated with 1% or 2% solution applied to the mouth and tongue for thrush.[1][2][3]

A 2-week-old exclusively breastfed infant was treated for oral thrush with aqueous 1% gentian violet solution twice daily for 1 day. The parents discontinued it because they thought it was causing airway discomfort. After 2 days, it was restarted at 4 times a day. Cough and difficulty feeding developed after 1 day and the infant was then admitted to the hospital, ultimately requiring intubation.[4]

## Effects on Lactation and Breastmilk

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

## Alternate Drugs to Consider

Clotrimazole, Fluconazole, Miconazole, Nystatin

## References

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## Substance Identification

### Substance Name

Gentian Violet

### CAS Registry Number

548-62-9

### Drug Class

Breast Feeding

Lactation

Anti-Infective Agents, Local