



Dr. MILK

MOTHERS INTERESTED IN LACTATION KNOWLEDGE
WWW.DRMILK.ORG

Dear Pharmacist,

You recently advised a breastfeeding mother to "pump and dump" while taking a medication that is generally regarded as compatible with breastfeeding.

We want to flag this because we know how often pharmacists and clinicians are asked these questions on the spot, with limited time and often outdated references at hand. Unfortunately, "pump and dump" advice is one of the most common sources of unnecessary breastfeeding interruption, and it's rarely evidence-based for the medications it's most often applied to.

A few free, reliable resources that are far more current than many standard drug references:

- LactMed (National Library of Medicine) <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK501922> — a free, regularly updated database specifically for maternal medication use during lactation.
- InfantRisk Center (Dr. Thomas Hale's program at Texas Tech) www.infantrisk.org — both a free app/website and a paid clinical subscription service, widely considered the gold standard for lactation risk categorization. I'd strongly recommend the subscription for anyone fielding these questions regularly.
- E-lactancia.org - another free online well regarded resource

I'd also gently note what's at stake when breastfeeding is interrupted unnecessarily:

- Continued breastfeeding lowers a mother's long-term risk of breast cancer, cardiovascular disease, and type 2 diabetes.
- Unnecessary pump-and-dump advice increases a mother's risk of mastitis and of over- or under-production, since it disrupts supply and demand.
- It also increases the likelihood that the infant is supplemented with formula, which carries its own risks compared with continued breastfeeding.

None of this is meant as a personal criticism — We know pharmacists are often the last line of defense against genuinely risky combinations, and that's valuable work but so is breastfeeding! We just want to make sure the resources you're relying on reflect current lactation pharmacology, since so much of what's taught in general pharmacy training and medical school is outdated on this specific topic.

Sincerely,

Dr. MILK
