

Breastfeeding Information

- You and your breastfed baby
- When breastfeeding does not work out
- Weaning and introducing solids
- Videos
- Special situations
- Sleep
- Breastfeeding resources in other languages
- Emergency situations
- Breastfeeding information from other organisations
- Breastfeeding and work
- Breastfeeding and the law
- Common concerns – baby
- Common concerns – mum
- Is this safe when breastfeeding?
- General breastfeeding information
- Expressing and storing breastmilk
- Early days
- Before your baby arrives

Beauty treatments and breastfeeding

Hair treatments

Hair treatments include hair colouring, hair curling (perms), hair bleaching and hair straightening (relaxers) agents.

Information about having hair treatments while breastfeeding is limited. However, the [Organization of Teratology Information Specialists](#) states that it is highly unlikely that a significant amount of the chemicals used would enter the breastmilk because very little enters the mother's bloodstream.

Hair removal

Topical products, such as depilatory creams, that are applied to the skin are poorly absorbed into the bloodstream and therefore are very unlikely to end up in breastmilk.

There is no evidence that electrolysis or laser hair removal would affect breastfeeding or your breastfed baby.

Postpartum hair loss

Postpartum hair loss is a normal reaction to pregnancy and birth in some women. Postpartum hair loss is **not** related to breastfeeding. For most women, their hair growth cycle will return to normal between 6 and 12 months after birth. If you feel your hair loss is excessive, or things are not returning to normal by 12 months, see your doctor.

Fake tans

The active ingredient in all self-tanning lotions is dihydroxyacetate (DHA), a chemical which stains the skin temporarily. There are no studies on DHA levels in breastmilk or its effect on the health of the breastfed baby.

If you decide to use self-tanners while breastfeeding, avoid putting the self-tanner on areas that the baby's mouth comes in contact with, such as the nipple and areola.

Tattoos

There are no current data about the safety of tattooing during breastfeeding and no negative impacts to babies have been reported after a mother has a tattoo when breastfeeding. Opinion favours mothers not getting a new tattoo when breastfeeding. However, the risks are theoretical and likely low.

The risk of a baby being exposed to infection via breastmilk after their mother gets a tattoo is likely to be very low, especially in tattoo studios that follow strict hygiene and sterilisation rules. Also, the risk of tattoo ink being passed onto a baby via breastmilk after their mother gets a tattoo is likely to be low due to the large size of molecules in the ink. However, the presence of tiny nanoparticles in tattoo ink needs further investigation.

Tattoo parlours in Australia have to be registered with the local council and each state has laws about infection control within the body art industry. The Victorian Government Department of Health ([Better Health Channel](#), 2020) advises people who want to get a tattoo to choose a reputable place that is registered with the local council.

References

Australian Breastfeeding Association (2011). *Breastfeeding and Body Modification: BOTOX®, Tattoos, Hair Dyes and Fake Tans*.

Australian Breastfeeding Association (2002). *Unusual Effects Sometimes Attributed To Breastfeeding*.

Farley, C.L., Van Hoover, C., Rademeyer, C.A. (2019). Women and tattoos: fashion, meaning, and implications for health. *Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health*, 00(0): 1–16.

Kluger, N. (2010). Body art and pregnancy, *European Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology and Reproductive Biology*, 153(1), 0–7.

Kluger, N. (2012). Can a mother get a tattoo during pregnancy or while breastfeeding? *European Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology and Reproductive Biology*, 161(2): 234–235.

Rademeyer, C., Farley, C.L., Van Hoover, C. (2020). Health Implications and Counseling Considerations for Individuals With Piercings and Tattoos. *Nursing for Women's Health*, 24(3), 210–227.

Serup, J. Kluger, N.; Baumler, W. (2015). Contraindications for Tattooing. *Current Problems in Dermatology*, 48: 76–87.

The information on this website does not replace the advice of your health care provider.

© Australian Breastfeeding Association April 2021

Last reviewed: Apr 2021



Looking for breastfeeding information & support?
Breastfeeding Helpline
1800 mum 2 mum
1800 686 268

breastfeeding ...
with **ABA**

A new podcast and blog
made by parents, for parents
blog.breastfeeding.asn.au

Hire a breast pump
> Find out how

Become a member
> Learn more

Shop now
for pamphlets, books & more

mum2mum
Brought to you by the Australian Breastfeeding Association
> download or update your app now

Donate now
& help us make a difference



Find related items

- Special situations
- Common concerns – mum
- Is this safe when breastfeeding?
- General breastfeeding information

All content of type BFINfo

