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OPIOID USE DISORDER AND YOUR BABY

Is opioid replacement therapy safe for pregnant mothers?

Yes, opioid replacement therapy, also known as medication-assisted therapy (MAT), is safe for pregnant mothers. Your healthcare provider will prescribe long-acting opioids like methadone or buprenorphine, which you will take during pregnancy and after your baby is born. These medications help reduce your need for opioids in a way that is safe for both you and your baby. They can also lower the risk of premature birth and growth problems for your baby. However, your baby may experience some withdrawal symptoms after birth.

Is it safe to take opioids while breastfeeding?

Breastfeeding is beneficial for both you and your baby. It promotes bonding and helps build your baby's immunity against infections. If your baby experiences neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) due to opioid exposure, breastfeeding may help alleviate the severity of withdrawal symptoms and reduce the need for medication, allowing your baby to leave the hospital sooner.

If you are using prescription opioids for pain relief under your provider's supervision, breastfeeding may be possible depending on the specific medication you are taking. Some opioids can pose life-threatening risks to your baby. It is important to inform the prescribing provider that you are breastfeeding and follow their instructions precisely. Pain relievers such as ibuprofen (Advil) or acetaminophen (Tylenol) are safe to use while breastfeeding.

If you are in medication-assisted therapy, you can breastfeed your baby if:

- Your health is stable, and you have stopped abusing opioids or using illicit drugs like cocaine or marijuana.
- You do not have HIV.
- Your MAT program is supervised, and your treatment is closely monitored.
- You have social support from friends and family throughout your treatment.
- Your baby continues to gain weight as you breastfeed.



What to know and do.

Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) happens when a baby goes through withdrawal from drugs the mother used during pregnancy, especially opioids. It's important to recognize the signs, symptoms, and proper care for babies with NAS. Babies with NAS may have health issues at birth and might need treatment in a hospital.

They can have low birthweight, jaundice (yellow eyes and skin), and experience problems with breathing, feeding, and sleeping. They may be fussy, cry a lot with a high-pitched sound, have body shakes, seizures, or fever. As they grow older, children with NAS may face difficulties with speech, language, and learning. They might require early intervention services to help them with walking, talking, and interacting with others.

Here are some important points to remember:

- Your baby may need to stay in the hospital for treatment after birth.
- It's crucial to seek ongoing care from a healthcare provider for your baby.
- Do not attempt to treat NAS on your own.
- To calm your baby, create a quiet room with dim lights, provide skin-to-skin care by placing your baby in a diaper on your bare chest, if possible breastfeed your baby, and read to them.
- Always place your baby on their back when sleeping to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).
- If you're concerned about your baby's development, inform their healthcare provider and ask about early intervention services.
- You can find services at cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly.

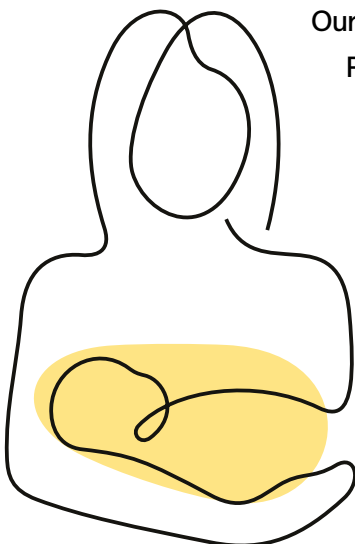
Sources:

<https://www.acog.org/womens-health/pregnancy>

<https://www.marchofdimes.org/find-support/topics/pregnancy/prescription-opioids-during-pregnancy>

How BHG can help.

We want what you want, what's best for you and your baby. That's why we help you track and document your treatment and recovery journey so that you can share your hard work and goals with others who might be decision makers in your circle of family, friends, providers, and supporters.



Our "My Baby and Me Recovery Passport" holds all of the important information you want and need as you meet with other providers, hospital delivery teams, and case workers. Your Passport helps confirm that you are in active treatment during your pregnancy, doing what's right for you and your baby. Ask your care team for more details.

Simply walk in or call 844.535.7291

Visit us at [BHGreccovery.com](https://www.bhgreccovery.com)

Medicare and Medicaid accepted.
Other coverage available.

BHG Treatment Center

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Hours of Operation:

Mon - Fri: 5:30am - 12:00pm
Sat: 8:00am - 12:00pm Sun: Closed

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