



WRHN
Waterloo Regional
Health Network

Breastfeeding and Medical Imaging Requiring Contrast Media Injection

**Developed in
collaboration with
the Medical
Imaging
Department and
the Children's &
Childbirth
Program**

Dear breastfeeding individual,

Your health care provider has ordered a test that requires an injection of contrast media, a solution often referred to as dye. The following information is provided to help you decide whether or not to continue breastfeeding your child or temporarily stop after receiving an injection of contrast.

There are two different kinds of contrast media used:

- iodine based contrast media (CT/X-ray procedures)
- gadolinium based contrast media (MRI)

Manufacturers of the contrast media recommend to temporarily stop breastfeeding for:

- 48 hours after receiving an injection of iodinated contrast
- 24 hours after receiving an injection of gadolinium contrast

What we know:

Both types of contrast pass into the breast milk in very small amounts. Scientific studies indicate that it's safe to continue breastfeeding after receiving an injection of contrast.

- Less than 1% of the administered dose of contrast passes into the breast milk.
- Less than 1% of the contrast that passes into the breast milk is absorbed from the child's gastrointestinal tract (stomach).
- The expected dose of contrast absorbed by a child from the breast milk is extremely low, approximately 0.01% of the dose given to the breastfeeding individual.

Can I continue to breastfeed after the test?

- Yes, you can continue to breastfeed as usual.

OR

- You can temporarily stop breastfeeding for 24-48 hours after receiving an injection of contrast. This is the time it takes for the contrast to leave your body. To protect your milk supply, continue to express and discard the milk from both breasts, as often as your child would have fed during this time, usually every 3 hours.
- If you know about your test ahead of time, you may wish to pump and refrigerate enough breast milk before the test to feed your child during the 24-48-hour period following the test.

This information was developed to help you make a decision that feels right for you and your child but this information does not replace direction given to you by your health care provider. If you have any further questions, please ask your health care provider.

References:

1. Tirada, N., Dreizin, D., Khatri, N.J., Akin, E.A., & Zeman, R.K. (2015). Imaging Pregnant and Lactating Patients. *Radiographics: A review publication of the Radiological Society of North America, Inc.*, 35(6), 1751-65. 2. American College of Radiology. (2021). ACR Manual on Contrast Media. pp. 101-102. https://www.acr.org/-/media/ACR/Files/Clinical-Resources/Contrast_Media.pdf

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