

Tattoos while Breastfeeding

Adapted from LaLeche League International and Lactmed

As the popularity of tattoos increases, so does the number of questions surrounding safety of getting a tattoo while breastfeeding. The most common question we receive at MilkWorks regarding this is “Is it safe to get a tattoo while breastfeeding”?

Unfortunately, as of the date of this writing, no one has studied the safety of tattooing during breastfeeding. Information can be found at the Drugs and Lactation Database (LactMed®)]. Bethesda (MD): National Institute of Child Health and Human Development; at: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK500563/>

It is generally assumed that the ink molecules or pigments used in the tattoo process are too large to pass into breastmilk. Once injected into the skin the ink is trapped, however it is unknown whether the ink can pass into the breastmilk as it slowly breaks down into the body months to years later.

General information/risks about tattooing also apply to breastfeeding women, such as local and systemic infection. Local infection can occur to the skin, when the recommended aftercare regimen is not followed. Allergic reactions to the ink used may occur as well. Systemic infections occur within the person's body when universal precautions are not followed by the tattoo artist and can include such diseases as hepatitis, tetanus and HIV.

A lactating parent should discuss their questions with a tattoo artist, as the tattoo artist may recommend the parent wait until after the child is no longer breastfeeding, to avoid liability concerns on the tattoo artists part, as they would not want to cause any risks or possible harm to your growing baby.



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