

ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS FROM BODY PIERCING TO TOOTH WHITENING!

Body Piercing

There is no evidence that nipple piercing (or other body piercing) affects breastfeeding. Some professional piercers recommend against getting a new nipple piercing while breastfeeding. Be sure to observe safety procedures and choose a reputable piercer, to help protect against diseases such as hepatitis and HIV.

Breast implants (silicone)

Silicone implants are considered to be compatible with breastfeeding, but the surgery itself can affect breastfeeding for some moms.

Bulletproof vests

Most bulletproof vests today are lightweight and shouldn't pose a problem with pressure on the chest. Keep in mind that your breast size will more than likely increase during pregnancy and breastfeeding, so the vest you wear pre-pregnancy may be too tight when you are breastfeeding – if the vest is too tight, it could cause problems with plugged ducts. If you are exceptionally prone to plugged ducts, the additional pressure from the weight of the vest might be a problem, but not under most circumstances. There are a number of case reports of nursing moms who have worn a bulletproof vest with no problem.

Chlorinated swimming pools

Not a problem. If baby is in the water, too, he will get more chlorine from the water around him than the tiny residual on mom's breast. Plus, keep in mind that most public water systems (where you get your drinking and/or bath water) chlorinate the water. If you are still concerned, you can always take a quick shower or give your breast a quick rinse with fresh water from a water bottle.

Hair Care Products (dyes, permanents, relaxers)

There is no evidence that hair care products (dyes, permanents, or hair relaxers) used by a nursing mom have any effect on her breastfeeding baby.

Hair Removal

In general, topical products (including hair removal products like Nair, etc.) that are applied to the skin do not end up in breastmilk, due to poor absorption into mom's bloodstream. The only caution I can find (and this was actually talking about using Nair to remove hair in the areola area) was to do a spot test first to make sure you're not allergic (and this applies to anyone using this type of product).

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

Hot tubs

Nursing moms should simply observe the usual precautions when using a hot tub. Make sure that it is clean and well maintained, as organisms found in hot tubs can cause a wide variety of ailments, including skin rashes and infections, urinary tract infections, irritation of the digestive system, lung disease and even hepatitis and Legionnaires' disease.

Insect Repellent

Per the [Centers for Disease Control](#), “There are no reported adverse events following use of repellents containing DEET in pregnant or breastfeeding women.”

Scuba Diving

There is no evidence that diving affects breastfeeding. It’s recommended that mom drink plenty of fluids, though, as diving can be very dehydrating (and dehydration can reduce milk supply, as well as contribute to decompression sickness).

Skin bleach

One common active ingredient of skin bleaching products is hydroquinone. Per Thomas Hale, PhD (author of *Medications and Mothers’ Milk*), most topicals are so poorly absorbed through the skin that they never really attain significant plasma levels in mom, and so they never end up in milk. This ought to be the case with hydroquinone, as it is known that [skin absorption is minimal](#).

Skin creams

Skin creams and lotions in general, including those containing alpha hydroxy acids, are not a problem for breastfeeding moms. Most are best kept away from the nipple area (so that baby does not swallow it). When it comes to topical medicines, virtually nothing passes through the skin to the bloodstream unless it is specifically formulated to do so (such as the nicotine patches).

Sunscreen, Self-tanning products

Because these are topically applied, very little would absorb through the skin into the bloodstream and therefore into your milk. They should not be a problem for the breastfeeding mom and baby. Do be careful about applying it on the breast – make sure baby doesn’t get any in his mouth.

The spray tanning booths (also called UV-free tanning, airbrush tanning, spray on tanning, etc.) come under the category of self-tanning products. To prevent baby ingesting the self-tanning lotion, wash the self-tanning product from your breasts before nursing.

Tanning

Tanning is completely compatible with breastfeeding and will not alter the milk whatsoever. There is no record of any dangers to the breastfed baby in relation to tanning. Sometimes clients are given Carotene to enhance the tanning – that should be avoided while breastfeeding. Make sure to protect your nipples from burn (for your own comfort more than anything), and keep in mind that ultraviolet exposure ages skin prematurely and increases the risk of cancer.

Tattoos

There is no evidence that getting a tattoo will affect breastfeeding. There should be no harm to mom or baby from the dyes injected. If you get a tattoo, the biggest concern for anyone (not just nursing moms) is infection (hepatitis or HIV)— so make sure the place you go has good references and is clean.

Tooth whiteners/tooth whitening

According to my references, teeth whiteners are carbamide peroxide, which is just a stabilized formulation of hydrogen peroxide. When it touches tissue, it releases pure hydrogen peroxide almost immediately. Its transfer to the plasma is minimal, if at all. According to Thomas Hale, PhD (in *Medications and Mothers’ Milk*), “it would be all but impossible for any to reach breastmilk except under extreme overdose.” Even if absorbed, it would be metabolized in seconds.