



Western Upper Peninsula Health Department **BREASTFEEDING**



BREASTFEEDING THROUGH COLDS & FLU: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Feeling under the weather while caring for a newborn can be incredibly tough—and if you're breastfeeding, you may wonder: Should I keep nursing while I'm sick? The short answer is: Yes—absolutely! In most cases, continuing to breastfeed while you're sick is not only safe, but beneficial for your baby.

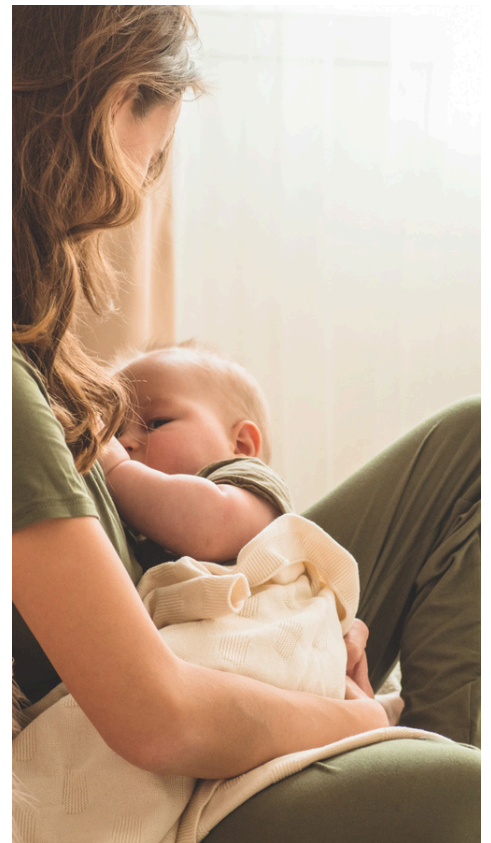
Why Breastfeeding is Good When You're Sick:

When your body is fighting off a virus (like a cold or the flu), it produces antibodies. These protective antibodies pass into your breast milk and help boost your baby's immune system, giving them extra protection against getting sick—or helping them recover faster if they do become ill.

Can My Baby Catch It From Me?

Maybe—but likely not through breast milk. Most viruses are spread through droplets from coughing, sneezing, or touching shared surfaces, not through breast milk. Good hygiene is your best defense:

- Wash hands frequently
- Avoid coughing/sneezing near your baby
- Wear a mask while feeding if you're symptomatic
- Sanitize bottles and pump parts thoroughly if you're expressing milk.



*Always remember you can ask for help by contacting your local WIC agency or breastfeeding peer support person
This institution is an equal opportunity provider*

Can I Take Medicine While Breastfeeding?

Yes—but choose wisely. Many cold and flu medications are safe, but some may reduce milk supply (like certain decongestants). Always ask a pharmacist or healthcare provider before taking any medication.

Rest, Hydrate, and Nourish Yourself.

You need energy to heal and make milk—so don't skip meals, stay hydrated, and get as much rest as possible. Ask your partner, family, or a friend to help with diaper duty or chores so you can focus on healing and feeding.

Bottom Line

You don't need to stop breastfeeding if you're sick—in fact, it's one of the best things you can do for your baby. Be gentle with yourself, nourish your body, and trust that your milk is still doing incredible work.



When to Call the Doctor

If you experience:

- A high fever (over 101°F/38.3°C) for more than 24–48 hours
- Trouble breathing or chest pain
- Signs of dehydration
- Baby seems unusually sleepy, has a fever, or refuses to feed

Whether you've already spoken with family or friends or are just looking for extra support, we encourage you to reach out to your local Health Department to connect with your Breastfeeding Peer Support person. We're here to help, listen, and support your goals without judgment. Let's reach them together!

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