

CAFFEINE

the world's most widely consumed psychoactive drug, changes nervous system function and results in alterations in perception, mood, consciousness, cognition, or behaviour



❑ May breastfeeding mothers drink coffee?

- Most breastfeeding mothers can drink caffeine in moderation.
- Medications and Mother's Milk¹ says caffeine is a Lactation Risk Category L2 (safer); milk levels are quite low and usually peak 1-2 hours after ingestion and has a half-life of 4.9 hours.
- If the ½ life of caffeine (Coffee) in an adult is about 4.9h it takes more than 24 hours to clear.²

❑ How much caffeine is too much?

- Various sources suggest a limit of 300 mg/day.³

❑ How much caffeine is in a cup of coffee⁴?

- Brewed Coffee (240ml): 95-200 mg of caffeine
- Decaffeinated Coffee (240ml): 2-15 mg of caffeine
- Espresso (30 mL): 47-75 mg of caffeine
- Instant Coffee (240ml): 30-180 mg of caffeine

▪ According to Breastfeeding Answers Made Simple⁵, excessive caffeine consumption by the mother (more than 750 mg per day) can result in a baby who shows signs of caffeine stimulation. If a mother consumes daily 750 mg of caffeine or more – the amount of caffeine in three 240ml cups of coffee – and her baby seems irritable, fussy, and doesn't sleep long, she can try substituting caffeine-free beverages for a week or two.

▪ The amount of caffeine that might affect a baby will vary widely depending upon the specific baby and the baby's age and health.

▪ Caffeine can be found in coffee, tea, soft drinks, sports/energy drinks (including the "sports water" products), some over-the-counter and prescription medications, and foods containing coffee or chocolate. Many herbal products, green tea etc. also contain caffeine.

❑ A word on chocolate:

▪ Theobromine and caffeine are similarly constructed types of pharmacologically active chemicals but with noticeably different effects.

▪ Theobromine affects the body in a similar way to caffeine, but it's 10 times weaker.⁶

▪ Theobromine is gentle, mild, has a slow onset, is long lasting and non-addictive whereas caffeine is intense, strong, fast acting, short lived and can be addictive.

▪ Theobromine is found in the cocoa solids, with a greater percentage in dark chocolate.

▪ Not all types of chocolate contain the same amount of theobromine: cocoa powder and plain chocolate contain the highest concentrations (20 mg/g and 15 mg/g), milk chocolate has much less (2 mg/g), and white chocolate has the lowest concentration (0.1 mg/g).⁷

▪ If 80g milk chocolate has about 40mg of theobromine then 2 slabs = 1 cup instant coffee containing 80mg of caffeine.

▪ If 750 mg of caffeine and/or theobromine makes babies irritable, fussy and don't sleep for long periods it will be about 2-3 cappuccino's per day or about 20 slabs of 80g chocolates/day 😊

¹Medications and Mothers' Milk. 2017. 17th Edition. Dr. Thomas W. Hale PhD, Dr. Hilary E. Rowe PharmD

²<https://kellymom.com/bf/can-i-breastfeed/lifestyle/caffeine/>

³<https://www.webmd.com/vitamins/ai/ingredientmono-979/caffeine>

⁴<https://www.roastycoffee.com/caffeine/>

⁵Nancy Mohrbacher. Breastfeeding Answers Made Simple: A Guide for Helping Mothers. Hale Publishing. 2010

⁶<https://www.gildshire.com/caffeine-vs-theobromine-which-is-better/>

⁷Finlay F, Guiton S. Chocolate poisoning. BMJ. 2005;331(7517):633