



## Nutmeg

Revised: May 17, 2021.

CASRN: 84082-68-8

## Drug Levels and Effects

### Summary of Use during Lactation

Nutmeg (*Myristica fragrans*) seeds contain myristic acid, trymiristin, fatty acid glycerides and an essential oil, thought to be responsible for nutmeg intoxication, containing myristicin, elemicin, eugenol, safrole. Mace is a similar spice made from the dried covering of the nutmeg seed. Nutmeg has no specific lactation-related uses. No data exist on the excretion of any components of nutmeg into breastmilk or on the safety and efficacy of nutmeg in nursing mothers or infants. Nutmeg, mace and their oils are "generally recognized as safe" (GRAS) as food ingredients by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. High doses (e.g., a spoonful) of nutmeg can cause intoxication that includes anticholinergic symptoms. Anticholinergics may reduce lactation.[1,2] In vitro studies found that nutmeg may have antiprogestosterone activity,[3] which also theoretically could affect lactation. Nutmeg and mace in amounts higher than those found in foods as a flavoring should be avoided during breastfeeding.

Dietary supplements do not require extensive pre-marketing approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Manufacturers are responsible to ensure the safety, but do not need to *prove* the safety and effectiveness of dietary supplements before they are marketed. Dietary supplements may contain multiple ingredients, and differences are often found between labeled and actual ingredients or their amounts. A manufacturer may contract with an independent organization to verify the quality of a product or its ingredients, but that does *not* certify the safety or effectiveness of a product. Because of the above issues, clinical testing results on one product may not be applicable to other products. More detailed information [about dietary supplements](#) is available elsewhere on the LactMed Web site.

### Drug Levels

*Maternal Levels.* Relevant published information was not found as of the revision date.

*Infant Levels.* Relevant published information was not found as of the revision date.

---

**Disclaimer:** Information presented in this database is not meant as a substitute for professional judgment. You should consult your healthcare provider for breastfeeding advice related to your particular situation. The U.S. government does not warrant or assume any liability or responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of the information on this Site.

**Attribution Statement:** LactMed is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

## Effects in Breastfed Infants

Relevant published information was not found as of the revision date.

## Effects on Lactation and Breastmilk

Relevant published information was not found as of the revision date.

## References

1. Bizzarro A, Iannucci F, Tolino A, et al. Inhibiting effect of atropine on prolactin blood levels after stimulation with TRH. *Clin Exp Obstet Gynecol.* 1980;7:108–11. PubMed PMID: 6788407.
2. Masala A, Alagna S, Devilla L, et al. Muscarinic receptor blockade by pirenzepine: Effect on prolactin secretion in man. *J Endocrinol Invest.* 1982;5:53–5. PubMed PMID: 6808052.
3. Zava DT, Dollbaum CM, Blen M. Estrogen and progestin bioactivity of foods, herbs, and spices. *Proc Soc Exp Biol Med.* 1998;217:369–78. PubMed PMID: 9492350.

## Substance Identification

### Substance Name

Nutmeg

### Scientific Name

*Myristica fragrans* *Myristica officinalis*

### CAS Registry Number

84082-68-8

### Drug Class

Breast Feeding

Lactation

Complementary Therapies

Phytotherapy

Plants, Medicinal