Breastfeeding with Opioid Use Disorder

**Breastfeeding Recommendations**

Breastfeeding is recommended for women with opioid use disorder (OUD) who are being treated with methadone or buprenorphine.

Levels of buprenorphine and methadone are very low in breast milk.

Healthcare professionals should take time to talk about the benefits of breastfeeding.

**Benefits**

Breastfeeding infants with neonatal abstinence syndrome can:

- Shorten hospitalizations
- Reduce need for medication treatment by 30% to 50%

Breastfeeding benefits such as skin-to-skin contact and holding the infant closely outweigh risks of maternal opioid secretion into breast milk.

**Breastfeeding Considerations**

Although a stable mother being treated for OUD with medication is encouraged to breastfeed her infant, sometimes breastfeeding is not recommended:

- Is HIV-positive
- Has tuberculosis
- Has cracked or bleeding nipples
- Is hepatitis C-positive
- Has returned to illicit drug use including cannabis

Sources: