

Domperidone- use for increasing milk supply

Domperidone or Motilium® is a medication usually used for the treatment of stomach discomfort, nausea and vomiting. A side effect of this medication is that it increases the hormone prolactin, which can stimulate the production of breastmilk. This medication can therefore be used by breastfeeding mothers in combination with good milk removal to increase their milk supply. This medication is not registered in NZ for this use but it is often used for this purpose.

If you have a low supply, you should first talk to your Midwife, Neonatal Nurse, or Lactation Consultant to check if there is anything else you could be doing to increase your supply.

Ensure you are

- Breastfeeding or expressing regularly minimum of 7 times a day and do not go longer than 4 hours at night without milk removal
- Check you have correct hand expressing technique
- Ideally you will have use of an electric pump and are using a hands-on pumping technique.
- Eating a well-balanced diet, drinking to thirst and resting when you can

Adverse effects, Precautions and Interactions

If you have any cardiac condition such as irregular heart rhythm or a family history of this you may not be able to take this medication or need an ECG prior to being prescribed it

Please discuss with your health professional any medications you are taking as they may not be compatible with this medication.

Grapefruit, grapefruit juice or sour/Seville oranges may interact with domperidone. Discuss with your pharmacist or health professional.

Potential side effects

Please notify your health professional if you experience any side effects. These may include:

- Dry mouth
- Headaches
- Abdominal cramps
- Diarrhoea

If you notice any fast or irregular heartbeat, or fainting – speak to your doctor immediately

Domperidone is safe to use while breastfeeding as the amount that could be ingested by an infant is very low and there are only a few side effects reported in both adults and breastfed infants

Prescription and Dose

This medication needs to be prescribed by the mother's health care professional. Many midwives will not prescribe this as they feel it is not within their scope of practice.

Domperidone can also be prescribed by an Obstetrician or your GP.

The starting dose is 10 mg (1 tablet) 3 times a day. Your midwife, lactation consultant or doctor may recommend that the dose is increased (e.g to 10 mg 4 times a day or 20mg 3 times a day). It may take 3 to 4 days to notice an effect and it can take up to 2 weeks to get a full effect.

You will be prescribed 4 weeks supply initially, and you may need a repeat prescription. Long term use has not been studied.

Discontinuing Domperidone

When discontinuing the domperidone that has increased your milk supply, it is important that you wean off slowly. You can do this by taking one less tablet per day for 3-4 days and seeing if it has had an effect on your milk supply. If it has no effect, continue to decrease by 1 tablet every few days until stopped. If your milk supply drops significantly, recommence your previous dose and continue for a further 2 weeks.

If you have any questions please consult with your health professional.