



LITTLE YARROW

TOP *Safe* Herbs for Pregnant & Breastfeeding MOTHERS

Herbal medicine has a long history of use amongst different cultures across the globe. Many herbs have been used to support women during pregnancy, birth and postpartum by traditional herbalists and midwives.

However, just because something is natural doesn't always mean that it's safe. Which is why it's important to be careful about what herbs are used during pregnancy as some can cause harm to both mother and baby.

An example of this is herbs that can increase the risk of miscarriage due to a strong downward action or stimulating effect on the uterus for example blue cohosh. Or herbs that have toxic effects such as blue tansy and pennyroyal.

The same goes for breastfeeding. Just like with pharmaceuticals, herbs can pass through the breastmilk to baby and so we need to be mindful of choosing herbs that are safe and won't cause harm.

Some herbs are considered unsafe as they may be toxic to baby, they may irritate babies gut, they may reduce breastmilk production or they may exert unwanted hormonal actions.

An example of this is Sage which is known to decrease breastmilk or berberine containing herbs such as Golden Seal.

Herbs can be wonderfully supportive to mothers during pregnancy and lactation when used with safety in mind. So it's important to know which ones can be used with confidence during this time.

When it comes to research we have traditional evidence from studying populations that have consumed particular herbs for many generations with no observed side effects. Then we have modern scientific research based on clinical controls. Some herbs don't have scientific research but they do have plenty of traditional evidence to support their use. Taking into account both types of evidence is important.

Below is a list of herbs that have both traditional and scientific evidence to show that they are safe for expecting and breastfeeding mothers to use.

They can be used in the form of tincture, tables and tea infusions for a variety of benefits such as relieving pregnancy complaints, preparing for birth, digestive support, mood, aiding sleep, calming the nervous system, building blood, increasing milk supply and boosting energy.

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HERB	USES	SAFE IN PREGNANCY	SAFE IN BREASTFEEDING	CONSIDERATIONS
Chamomile	Anxiety, stress, insomnia, digestion, post birth healing	Yes	Yes	Avoid in known allergy
Ginger	Digestion, nausea, vomiting, afterbirth pains	Yes	Yes	Caution with blood thinning medications
Echinacea	Colds and Flu, Infection, mastitis	Yes	Yes	Avoid in known allergy
Fennel	Digestion, boosts milk supply, relieves colic	Yes	Yes	None known
Peppermint	Digestive aid, bloating	Yes	Yes	Avoid in reflux
Lavender	Anxiety, insomnia, depression, post birth healing	Yes	Yes	Avoid in known allergy
Lemon Balm	Anxiety, depression, stress, baby blues	Yes	Yes	None known
Nettle	Blood building, fluid retention	Yes	Yes	None known
Turmeric	Depression, boosts milk supply	Yes	Yes	Caution with gallstones
Raspberry Leaf	Tones uterus, prepares for birth	Yes	Yes	None known