



# London Health Sciences Centre

## Patient Information

# BREASTFEEDING AFTER A CT SCAN WITH CONTRAST DYE

### What is a contrast dye?

Contrast dye is used to make parts of the body easier to see in a CT scan. It may be necessary to use a contrast dye to diagnose certain health problems.

Contrast dyes contain iodine. This is the same mineral that is added to table salt. The amount of iodine in the contrast dye used is considered safe for babies, children and adults.

### Can I breastfeed after the CT scan?

Based on the available research data, it is believed that it is safe to continue breastfeeding.

You do not need to stop breastfeeding for any amount of time unless you choose to.

- After a CT scan with contrast dye, a small amount of iodine can be found in breastmilk.
- Only a tiny amount of the contrast, less than 1% passes from you to your baby in your breastmilk.
- There are theoretical concerns about potential risks to the infant which include allergic sensitization/reaction, or direct toxicity, but these have not been confirmed in the medical literature.
- Many babies including premature babies have a CT scan done where they receive contrast dye.

### What if I choose to wait?

If you are concerned about your baby's exposure, you may choose to wait for a period of 24 hours before resuming breastfeeding. If you decide to do this, you will need to express and discard your breastmilk by hand or pump every 3 hours to keep up your milk supply. If you do not regularly remove milk from your breasts you may lower your milk volume. This may make you feel uncomfortable because your breasts are too full, increasing your risk of getting a blocked duct or breast infection.

- Contact your Public Health Nurse or Lactation Consultant, or a health care provider knowledgeable about breastfeeding if you have any questions about milk removal.
- After 24 hours, even the trace amounts of iodine would be cleared from your system.

**Stopping breastfeeding even for small periods of time and giving your baby a bottle may cause feeding difficulty**

#### References:

Adapted with permission from Hamilton Regional Lactation Committee, 2012. PD7912-06/2012 Wpc/pted/Breastfeeding AfterCTScanContrastMedia-lw.docdt/June 12,2012.

American College of Radiology, Committee on Drugs and Contrast Media. Administration of Contrast Media to Breastfeeding Mothers,

Document prepared with consultation of Emily Ung, BSc.PhM, RPh. (January, 2014)

Adapted by the Middlesex London Breastfeeding Coalition with representation from London Health Sciences Centre, Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital and the Middlesex London Health Unit - March 2014