



Domperidone

This medication is used in Canada to treat digestive problems. This medication also tends to increase prolactin levels in anyone who uses it. We use this side-effect to increase milk production in nursing mothers. This is called an off-label use.

Is it going to be effective?

The results vary from mother to mother. It is quite good at increasing a previously good milk supply that has been suppressed by pumping, infrequent nursing or excessive formula use. It is less effective for increasing a milk supply that was never good, as with a breast reduction.

How do I take it?

We usually start with a one-week trial of 10 mg four times per day. Take the medication with meals and at bed time. Because the medication is usually given for digestive problems, the instructions say to take the medication 'A hour before meals. As we are using it to increase milk production, you can simplify things and just take it with meals. If there has been a small improvement in milk production, we sometimes increase the medication to 20 mg four times per day.

How do I know it is working?

If it is going to work, mothers usually note more fullness, leaking, breast heaviness, infant contentedness and increases in the amount of milk pumped within three to four days.

How long do I use it?

This can be quite variable. Sometimes we try and stop it after three months of use. Some other mothers use it until baby is a year or more. Usually we stop it abruptly. If the mother does not note any change in herself or baby, she probably does not need it anymore. If the breasts seem less full or if the baby is more hungry, we usually re-start it for a further three months.



Is it safe?

No medication is totally safe. However, domperidone has been sold in Canada for more than 15 years. There have not been any side-effects reported in babies whose mothers use domperidone. For the mothers, like any other medication it can cause side effects. The most common one is headaches. It is rare that other problems arise. These can include allergic reactions, movement disorders, stomach problems, and abnormal heart rhythms. If you develop a side effect, stop taking the drug immediately. Please ask your pharmacist for more information.

Domperidone should not be combined with some medications. Some of these include the following: fluconazole, ketoconazole, erythromycin, diltiazem and verapamil.