

Shatavari – a wonder herb for breastfeeding mothers

Shatavari helps lactating mothers produce more milk. It has many other health benefits for breastfeeding mothers.

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We all know that breast milk is the perfect food for babies. Even the World Health Organization (WHO) recommends mothers to exclusively breastfeed their babies for the first six months to achieve optimal growth, cognitive development and health. However, some mothers are unable to provide sufficient breast milk for their infants due to reasons such as insufficient glandular tissue, hormonal changes, nutritional deficiencies, birth control pills or an improper lactating position. While there are many ways to help a mother lactate, one of the most effective ways to stimulate milk production is through Ayurvedic herbs. And one herb, which can work wonders for lactation, is Shatavari. Here are 10 foods which can help you increase breast milk supply. (<http://www.thehealthsite.com/pregnancy/10-foods-that-increase-breast-milk-supply-in-mothers-da0115/>)

'There are some herbs that can help new mothers to deal with the problem of insufficient milk supply and Shatavari is one of them. Shatavari contains steroidal saponins mainly shatavarins that helps to increase the production of milk. It also helps nurture the health of the foetus and reduce chances of miscarriages,' says **Dr Muhammed Majeed, founder and chairman, Sami Labs**. Know if you need to increase your water intake or change your diet during breastfeeding. (<http://www.thehealthsite.com/parenting/should-you-increase-your-water-intake-or-change-your-diet-during-breastfeeding-d0317/>)

A study published in **Iranian Journal of Pharmaceutical Research in 2011** pointed out the benefits of Shatavari consumed by lactating mothers. During the study, capsules containing Shatavari roots given to lactating mothers. The dosages were given according to their body weight. Approximately 60 mg of Shatavari per kg of body weight was given to 70 women during the study. The subjects had three capsules of the herb with milk for 30 days. At the end of the study, it was seen that:

- Mothers who took the Shatavari capsules had an increase in mean prolactin hormone levels as compared to a mother who received a placebo drug during the study. Prolactin is the hormone responsible for increasing breast milk supply in lactating mothers.
- Both the mother and babies showed a substantial increase in weight after consumption of the herb after the study.
- Overall satisfaction and bonding of both mother and child improved once the mother was able to lactate well and carry on with the breastfeeding challenges. Here are four common breastfeeding problems and how to solve them.

(<http://www.thehealthsite.com/pregnancy/breastfeeding-week-2014-4-common-breastfeeding-woes-and-how-to-dodge-them/>)

The research also found the drug to be safe and non-toxic for mothers and infants. However, if you want to use Shatavari to improve your breast milk supply, it is best to talk to your doctor or an Ayurvedic practitioner before doing the same.

Reference:

Gupta, M., & Shaw, B. (2011). A Double-Blind Randomized Clinical Trial for Evaluation of Galactagogue Activity of *Asparagus racemosus* Willd. *Iranian journal of pharmaceutical research: IJPR*, 10(1), 167.

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