

Can I Use Bio-Oil While Breastfeeding?



Neda Mehr, MD, a board-certified dermatologist and medical director at [Pure Dermatology Cosmetic & Hair Center](#), in Newport Beach, Calif., concurs. “Bio-Oil is a popular over-the-counter beauty oil that markets itself to pregnant females as a stretch mark prevention oil,” she adds. “During pregnancy, it lists on its ‘How to Use’ guide to ‘apply it twice daily from the start of the second trimester.’”

It’s so raved about in the maternal world that, as a mother of two boys, even Dr. Mehr distinctly remembers almost hopping on the Bio-Oil bandwagon as she witnessed her baby belly growing. And who could blame her? A 4.5-star rating out of nearly 112K customer reviews on Amazon doesn’t materialize out of just nowhere.^[4] Still, that doesn’t necessarily mean there shouldn’t be cause for concern.

Is It Safe to Use Bio-Oil While Breastfeeding?

Dr. Mehr elaborates that multiple ingredients in Bio-Oil are concerning according to the FDA's scale, including retinyl palmitate, a vitamin A derivative, which is commonly known as retinol, tretinoin, or Retin-A. "This effectively means that risk to the fetus cannot be ruled out," she cautions. "[Therefore], most dermatologists would agree that this class of beauty products should be avoided during pregnancy and [breastfeeding]."

Calming & Restorative

Similarly, Dr. Mehr points out that the expansion of your belly while pregnant causes tension on your skin cells and increases their production to keep up with your body's demands. "Using a hydrating oil could be very useful to prevent itching and discomfort from this process." The formula also contains antioxidant chamomile oil and vitamins, among various essential oils, which are known to be soothing and reparative to your skin. ^[3]

Breastfeeding-Safe Alternatives

Finally, if you're not the gambling type, both of our experts have some breastfeeding-safe skincare tips you can try, particularly if your breasts feel uncomfortable, irritated, or chafed.

Dr. Mehr recommends extra virgin coconut oil, a potent antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and antibacterial hydrating oil to soothe and protect your delicate skin. She also encourages remembering a straightforward skincare edict: "Less is often better...especially when it comes to what we eat, medications we ingest, aggressive exercises or movements we perform, and, of course, beauty and skincare products we put on our bodies."

Likewise, Dr. Hausauer advocates a minimalist approach, while emphasizing the importance of caring for your breast and nipple skin when breastfeeding. Firstly, she advises washing your breasts and nipples daily with warm water and gentle soap. "[Then], treat or prevent nipple tenderness by using a safe nipple cream or even drops of your breast milk, which contain skin softeners and antibodies to prevent infection, and air dry."