

Medications Commonly used in Maternal Newborn

Medication	Mechanism of Action/Use	Nursing considerations
Methotrexate	Slows rapidly growing cells due to inhibition of dihydrofolate reductase and interrupts process that causes inflammation to prevent joint damage (NDH, 2023)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor CBC, chest x-ray, liver, and renal tests • High doses can impair renal elimination through crystals that obstruct urine flow • Increase patient's fluid intake
Mifepristone	Used to block cortisol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let the patient know that vaginal bleeding can occur
Rhogam	Used to suppress immune response of RH- people to PH+ red blood cells	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that a Coombs blood test is done
Promethazine	Treats motion sickness, nausea, vomiting, and signs and symptoms of allergic response (NDH, 2023)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use cautiously in children because they can be more sensitive to side effects • Monitor hematologic status • Patients shouldn't have intradermal allergen tests within 72 hours because drug can alter flare response
Pyridoxine and Doxylamine	Used to treat nausea and vomiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure that the patient isn't breastfeeding
Ondansetron	Prevents nausea and vomiting associated w/ radiotherapy/chemotherapy by blocking serotonin receptors centrally in the chemoreceptor trigger (NDH, 2023).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor patient for serotonin syndrome which can include agitation, chills, confusion, and diaphoresis • Monitor patient ECG • This drug may mask symptoms of adynamic progressive ileus/gastric distention after abdominal surgery
Betamethasone	Helps to cause the release of surfactant which helps to lubricate infant lungs, so they don't stick together when they breath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using this drug about 3-9 days before delivery of a preterm baby can decrease postpartum milk productions
Indomethacin	Treats hemodynamically significant patent ductus arteriosus in premature infants by blocking cyclooxygenase which mediates inflammatory response and cause local pain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor patients for thrombotic events because NSAIDs increase the risk • Assess patient skin for rash • Monitor liver enzymes

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	(NDH, 2023).	
Magnesium Sulfate	Corrects and prevents magnesium deficiency (NDH, 2023).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch for early signs of hypermagnesemia which can manifest as bradycardia, dyspnea, nausea, vomiting, and weakness
Terbutaline Sulfate	Used to prevent or reverse bronchospasm from asthma, bronchitis, or emphysema by stimulating beta2-adrenergic receptors in the lungs (NDH, 2023).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use cautiously in patients w/ cardiovascular disease • Assess patient respiratory rate, depth, and quality before administering this medication
Glyburide	Helps to control blood glucose levels in type 2 diabetes by stimulating insulin release from beta cells in the pancreas (NDH, 2023).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High risk of hypoglycemia • Administer insulin as needed
Insulin	Helps to improve glycemic control in patients w/ diabetes by lowering blood glucose levels (NDH, 2023).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor for signs and symptoms of hypoglycemia • Monitor blood glucose levels closely
Hydralazine hydrochloride	Used to manage severe hypertension (NDH, 2023).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check blood pressure and pulse regularly • Expect to withdraw hydralazine gradually
Labetalol	Used to manage hypertension by selectively blocking alpha and beta receptors in the heart (NDH, 2023).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor blood glucose levels in diabetic patients
Nifedipine	Inhibits L-type gated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch for edema, flushing, and dizziness. • Check blood pressure regularly
Calcium gluconate	Used to treat or prevent hypocalcemia or as an adjunct to treat magnesium intoxication by increasing calcium in the body (NDH, 2023).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor for aluminum toxicity • Monitor serum calcium • Check IV for infiltration because calcium causes necrosis
Misoprostol	Helps to increase strength and frequency of contractions by binding to uterine smooth muscle cells	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor heart rate for at least an hour • Monitor uterine activity
Cervidil	Assists with labor by softening the cervix during preparation for childbirth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should only be prescribed and used during pregnancy

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Penicillin G	Used to treat infections caused by gram positive organisms by inhibiting final stage of bacterial cell wall synthesis (NDH, 2023).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess for secondary infections Obtain culture and sensitivity tests before giving first dose Monitor serum sodium levels
Methylergonovine	Increases tone, rate, and amplitude of contractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check patient blood pressure
Nalbuphine (Nubain)	Works as an analgesic with less side effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch for withdrawal symptoms if medication is stopped too quickly
Naloxone—	Used as a pure mu-opiate receptor competitive antagonist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch for respiratory depression
Fentanyl	Used as an option for labor pain relief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess for pain before use
Ibuprofen	Treats pain and inflammation in those who are breastfeeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take with food Medication can affect baby's circulation and kidneys
acetaminophen	Used to combat fever in pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess for pain levels and fever
oxycodone	Helps with pain management by mimicking the body's natural pain response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor for respiratory depression Monitor for addiction or abuse
hydrocodone	Produces analgesic effects by activating mu-opioid receptors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor for pain relief, constipation, and other adverse side effects
ketorolac	Relieves pain, especially after surgery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor for allergic reactions Monitor for GI bleeding/distress
Hepatitis B vaccine	Helps the body create its own defense against the disease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vaccine should be given within 12 hours after birth from an infected mother
Erythromycin eye ointment	Inhibits bacteria synthesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor blood pressure and pulse Do not rinse eyes after administration
Phytonadione	Helps with clotting by helping the blood thicken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor PT/INR levels
Prenatal vitamins	Helps with healthy brain and spinal cord development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform the patient that these vitamins contain high

