



Can You Have Manuka Honey While Pregnant? - What You Need to Know

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Pregnancy can come with a multitude of emotions. Some women may experience sadness, excitement, overflowing feelings of love, anxiety, fear, and so much more.

Many mothers-to-be become super aware of the fact that whatever they apply to their skin or ingest may be passed on to their unborn baby. Due to this, many pregnant women are currently opting for natural products they feel are safe for them and their baby.

Is Manuka honey safe for pregnancy? Incorporating Manuka honey into your diet during pregnancy can be a delightful and safe choice that serves as a wonderful sweetener. Reassuringly, numerous sources confirm that Manuka honey is generally considered safe for consumption while pregnant.

Please keep in mind that here at Bees & Trees Manuka Honey, we do not claim to be medical professionals and recommend that you consult with your doctor, health care provider, or holistic practitioner when making any dietary decisions during pregnancy and postpartum.



Manuka Honey and Pregnancy: Is Manuka Honey Safe for the Baby?



While it is not recommended to give honey to babies under 12 months old, consuming Manuka honey while pregnant differs from giving your baby honey after their birth. Adult stomachs are fully developed and are better equipped to limit the colonization of bacteria in honey that sometimes makes babies sick with a rare illness called Botulism. In rare cases, infants have developed Botulism after ingesting clostridium botulinum spores, found scarcely in various soils and honey products. (1) Infant Botulism occurs because babies under one year of age do not yet have fully developed digestive systems that are equipped to handle these Botulism spores, leading to colonization of the spores. Having these types of spores occur in honey is uncommon. Still, the condition may be serious, so it is recommended to withhold giving newborns less than a year old honey.

So, is there still a Botulism risk with honey for an unborn baby? This question is addressed in an article published in 2010 in the journal Canadian Family Physician (2) linked in the footnotes below. The article is about the overall risks of food-borne illness during pregnancy and provides information on the effect that honey is recognized as safe in this regard. From this article: "The molecular weight of the botulinum toxin is approximately 150 kDa; therefore, it is unlikely to cross the placenta via passive diffusion. A case report in which a woman acquired botulism during pregnancy suggested that there is no increased risk to the fetus. Together with the low risk of colonization botulism among healthy adults, women without gastrointestinal pathology do not need to avoid honey during pregnancy."



The green light to enjoy the pure natural sweetness of Manuka honey isn't all that this superfood has to offer during pregnancy. The powerful antibacterial and immune-strengthening properties of Manuka honey may help strengthen your immune system, helping to keep both you and your baby healthy and happily buzzing around during pregnancy.

Benefits of Manuka Honey during Pregnancy

Now that we've looked into the safety of Manuka honey during pregnancy, let's answer the question, "Is manuka honey good for pregnancy?"

1. Manuka Honey Antibacterial and Immune Protecting Properties



Unfortunately, many pregnant women deal with backaches, swollen ankles, cravings, fatigue, and many more physical ailments. Pregnancy may also lower your immune system – leaving you extra susceptible to ailments such as the flu and the common cold. Keeping your immune system strong is vital to a healthy pregnancy. It is essential to understand which products are considered safe for the baby while also strengthening the mother's immune system.

Manuka honey is well known and studied for its antibacterial properties. An article [\(3\)](#) published by AIMS Microbiology in 2018 states that “researchers have found that honey is effective against a wide range of pathogens. The antibacterial potency of Manuka honey was found to be related to the Unique Manuka Factor (UMF) rating, which is correlated with the methylglyoxal (MGO or MG) and total phenols content.” There is further research published by Food Quality and Safety [\(4\)](#) that suggests the prebiotic



potential of honey contributes to the core functions of sustaining healthy digestive and immune systems.

At Bees & Trees, we consider this superfood a health investment, as Manuka honey's powerful antibacterial properties may help women with suppressed immune systems during pregnancy. Taking a few teaspoons of Mānuka honey daily helps eradicate unwanted bacteria in your gut while building good bacteria, which may heal and soothe digestion, prevent infections, and build your overall immunity.

2. Manuka Honey for Digestion Support and Acid Reflux



Pregnancy is no easy feat. Many pregnant women suffer from morning sickness, acid reflux, insomnia, and general discomfort. As a pregnant woman, you might be wondering how you can shake these woes and get a good night's sleep – with a more natural approach.

Manuka honey may be great for soothing an upset stomach. The antimicrobial properties of Manuka honey fight off bad bacteria while enhancing good bacteria, such as lactobacillus. (4) This probiotic improves gut health, breaks down food, and helps absorb nutrients. By kicking out all the nasty unwanted bacteria and only keeping the good healthy bacteria, Manuka honey promotes a healthy gut flora which may help reduce sickness.

Manuka honey also works as an anti-inflammatory that may reduce swelling in the gut to soothe digestion. During the third trimester, pregnancy hormones can cause the



digestive system to slow down. The muscles that push food down the esophagus begin to move more slowly during pregnancy. As the uterus grows, it pushes on the stomach, which may push acid back up the esophagus. Sometimes this can trigger a gag reflex. Unfortunately, for many pregnant women, acid reflux can come on before the third trimester. The abundance of prebiotics and probiotics in Manuka honey helps balance the overall flora of your internal digestive system, resulting in an increased immune system and a non-acid-reflux-friendly environment.

3. Manuka Honey for Insomnia



When constantly faced with nausea, heartburn, or general discomfort, it's no surprise that insomnia is an issue that many pregnant women experience. However, when it comes to getting a good night's sleep, Manuka honey may help improve sleep quality.

Pairing milk with honey may be associated with enhancing sleep by slowly releasing the glycogen needed for essential bodily functions. A study (5) including 68 people who were hospitalized for heart disease found that drinking a mixture of milk and honey twice daily for 3 days improved overall sleep quality. A study from 2019 (6) states that "During sleep, the brain typically utilizes liver glycogen stored to provide continuous and adequate energy; foods that promote liver glycogen storage before sleep may ensure availability of this energy source and therefore lead to better sleep. Raw honey is a rapidly digestible and metabolizable dense energy source and thus may provide this sleep time energy reserve. Additionally, honey may promote melatonin formation due to its possible tryptophan content (a precursor to melatonin) that both help to initiate sleep



as well as promote the release of hormones that facilitate whole-body recovery during sleep.”

4. **Manuka Honey for Stretch Marks**



Every new mom hopes that after giving birth, the hardships of pregnancy will end. But, many women face difficulties postpartum, especially when it comes to stretch marks and getting their body back to where it was before.

Manuka honey’s ability to aid in the healing of skin is a widely researched property. A plethora of in vitro and in vivo studies have been performed in this regard. Manuka honey contains a gluconic acid that stimulates the production of collagen and elastin. Collagen is a protein found in the skin that is responsible for skin elasticity – as you age, less collagen is produced. Elastin is a protein found in the skin that helps the skin return to its shape after stretching or contracting. Due to this unique health benefit, Manuka honey may be used to combat postpartum stretch marks on your hips, thighs, and stomach.

The article, Honey: A Therapeutic Agent for Disorders of the Skin states that “It has been suggested that the immunomodulatory properties of honey may contribute to enhanced tissue repair.” (7) Studies have also shown that honey from a variety of sources can modulate immunological parameters related to the skin immune system.²³ One in vitro study states honey has been shown to stimulate cytokine production by skin cells such as keratinocytes and other immune cells such as monocytes.^{24,25} It has been proposed



that increased cytokine production in early skin abrasions could allow for tissue repair.
(1)

Why Bees & Trees Manuka Honey for Pregnancy



Thanks to Manuka honey pregnancy benefits, it is a strong choice for those seeking quick, effective, and natural support. Consuming 1-2 teaspoons of High-Activity Manuka honey daily during pregnancy may help boost your immune system, alleviate gut health issues, provide skincare benefits, and aid in your sleep regulation.

Bees & Trees Manuka honey is raw, minimally processed, and produced in small batches from our own hives. Our honey comes from the prized Taranaki, New Zealand region, known to produce some of the highest quality Manuka honey in the world. We are the only United States-based Manuka honey brand that owns our own hives, our own processing facility, packs our honey in glass jars (not plastic!), and imports directly from NZ specifically for the United States market.

We hope that you found this article helpful and insightful. May your pregnancy flourish through the natural healing power of Bees & Trees Manuka honey!



FAQ:

1. Can I eat Manuka honey while pregnant?

Yes, it's safe to eat Manuka honey during pregnancy. While it's not safe to give honey to infants under a year old, indulging in honey when you're pregnant poses no risk to your developing baby.

Appendix:

1. Infant Botulism <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/11996423/>
2. Foodborne Illness During Pregnancy <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2860824/>
3. Antibacterial Activity of Manuka honey and its components <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31294240/>
4. Effect of honey in improving the gut microbial balance <https://academic.oup.com/fqs/article/1/2/107/3860141>
5. Honey and Milk: Benefits <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/honey-and-milk#benefits>
6. Honey to Improve Sleep Quality <https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/NCT04207281>
7. Honey: A Therapeutic Agent for Disorders of the Skin <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5661189/>