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# Jamu medicine: Healing women's bodies

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## Résumé

lms:o="urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:office" xmlns:w="urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:word" xmlns:m="http://schemas.microsoft.com/office/2004/12/omml" xmlns="http://www.w3.org/TR/REC-html40"> The paper presents findings from a recent ethnographic study conducted in Yogyakarta, Indonesia on women's experiences of breastfeeding using Jamu medicine to resolve the problem of insufficient production of breast milk. Jamu is a traditional herbal medicine of central Java, Indonesia made from a mixture of spices, roots, leaves, chunks of woods, honey, palm sugar and eggs to promote health and beauty. The mixed ingredients of jamu depends on illness, gender and taste. We interviewed 11 breastfeeding mothers and also made observations at Jamu shops on the types of Jamu that nursing mothers buy. Women expressed concerns about the inability of their bodies to produce enough breast milk immediately after birth to feed their babies. In order to fix the problem of inadequate breast milk, women were strongly advised by their family members and friends to drink Jamu made from papaya leaf to enhance the production of enough breast milk. Mothers also drink jamu on behalf of their babies when they get fever, cold or flu as it is believed that jamu has no side effects as compared western medicine. While some women argue that Jamu gives good taste to the breast milk, energizes mothers and protect infant and mother against illnesses, others questioned the scientific basis of jamu.

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