

TREATING ENGORGEMENT

- **Warmth:** A warm shower or warm washrag applied to breasts before a feeding may help soften the breasts and allow baby to feed better and remove more milk. The warm shower may cause your breasts to leak a little and reduce the engorgement.
- **Cold:** Some women find that applying cold ice packs or a bag of frozen vegetables, wrapped in a towel, can help reduce swelling. This can be done between feedings. Place on breasts for 10-20 minutes.
- **Cabbage:** Cabbage leaves have been found to help with engorgement and relieve some pain. Insert a cold cabbage leaf in your bra and leave it there for about 15-30 minutes. This can be done 2-3 times per day or until you start to feel some relief. Do not overuse the cabbage leaves or your milk supply may start to decrease.
- **Expression:** Engorgement can make it difficult for a baby to latch on if breasts are very hard due to fullness. You can use a pump to express a small amount of milk. Remove just enough milk to relieve discomfort and make breasts soft and easy for baby to latch on to. Hand expression is also a way to remove a small amount of milk, use a clean bowl or cup to express milk in to.

Visit the following link to view an instructional video on hand expression:

<http://newborns.stanford.edu/Breastfeeding/HandExpression.html>

Breastfeeding Help:

Anoka County WIC:

763-324-4230

Anoka County Public Health Nurse:

763-324-4240

LaLeche League:

1-877-452-5324

National Women's Health

Breastfeeding Helpline:

1-800-994-9662

Mercy Hospital Breastfeeding Warmline:

763-236-7430



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Created by Anoka County WIC



Sore Nipples
and
Engorgement

WHAT CAUSES SORE NIPPLES?

There can be many causes for sore nipples. It is important to understand that some sensitivity and discomfort is normal, especially at the beginning of a feeding and when you and your baby are first getting comfortable with breastfeeding. Any discomfort should resolve within the first 1-2 weeks. Soreness and discomfort that lasts longer than the first 1-2 minutes of a feeding is cause for concern.

HOW CAN I PREVENT SORE NIPPLES?

Although there can be different causes for sore nipples, such as; engorgement, mastitis, and thrush, the most common cause is poor latch. When the baby has a good latch, breastfeeding will feel comfortable.

TIPS FOR A GOOD LATCH

- ◇ Find a comfortable spot on the couch or in a chair.
- ◇ Make sure baby's mouth is opened wide.
- ◇ Baby should take a mouthful of breast.
- ◇ You can shape your breast using your free hand in a C or U- hold to help baby take more of the breast into his mouth.

Keep breastfeeding!

Contact your WIC clinic or other breastfeeding support person for extra help.



HOW CAN I TELL IF MY BABY HAS A GOOD LATCH?

It should feel:

- Breastfeeding should feel comfortable.
- You should feel a gentle tugging at the breast when baby is feeding.
- Any pain or discomfort with breastfeeding should last no more than 1-2 minutes into the feeding before resolving on its own.

You should see:

- Baby's lower lip rolled out.
- Most of the areola (dark part around the nipple) in his mouth.
- Baby's chin touching your breast and a small space between his nose and your breast.

BREAST ENGORGEMENT

Following delivery it is not uncommon to have breasts that feel full, tender and in some cases very hard. This is a result of your body producing more breastmilk than baby needs at that time. Over time, your body will adjust milk production to meet your baby's needs and you will not feel engorged.

PREVENT ENGORGEMENT

- ◇ Hold your baby on your bare chest right after delivery. This will allow your baby to start breastfeeding right away.
- ◇ Make sure you are feeding your baby often, newborns eat about 8-12 times per day!
- ◇ Make sure that your baby has a good latch and is removing the milk from your breast.
- ◇ Don't skip feedings or supplement with formula.

TIPS FOR MOM

- ✓ Talk to your doctor right away if you have nipples that are cracked or bleeding.
- ✓ Work on breastfeeding when baby is calm and just starting to become hungry.
- ✓ Avoiding giving bottles or pacifiers to your baby before 4-6 weeks of age as it may interfere with breastfeeding.
- ✓ Laying on your back can help reduce breast engorgement.
- ✓ Choose a bra that fits correctly. Tight fitting bras can cause swelling.