

Many breastfeeding women feel some nipple soreness. Mothers often have very slight soreness when babies, less than two weeks old, latch onto the breast. This is normal -- don't give up! This feeling eases within the first 45 to 60 seconds of nursing. When a baby is about three to five days old, the soreness may become more intense. It often stops by the time babies are 10 days old. By a baby's second week of life, most mothers do not have nipple soreness.

Contact a breastfeeding specialist for extra help if:

- ✓ Your nipples are cracked or bleeding.
- ✓ There are blisters on your nipples.
- ✓ You still feel sore after the baby is two weeks old.
- ✓ The soreness lasts the whole feeding.
- ✓ The soreness begins after your baby is two weeks old.

Tips to prevent or relieve sore nipples and increase comfort...

- ♥ Check to see that your baby is positioned properly. **Having your baby positioned the right way is one of the most important ways to prevent nipple soreness.** Be sure to hold your baby close, facing your breast (tummy to tummy), with hips, shoulder, and head all in line. It helps to use different breastfeeding positions (such as cradle hold or football hold). This will help change the place on your breast where your baby's suck is strongest.
- ♥ Be sure baby is latched on correctly. You should notice that a large portion of your areola, the dark area around your nipple, is in your baby's mouth (about 1 to 1 1/2 inches back from the tip of the nipple). Your baby's lips should form a seal around your breast and should be turned out. She should be in close, with her chin, and maybe also her nose, touching your breast.

- ♥ Breastfeed often. Nurse your baby at least every 2 to 3 hours, and at least 8 times per day for younger babies. If your baby does not wake-up often enough, wake him to nurse. Be sure to nurse long enough to soften and empty the breast -- at least 10 to 15 minutes per breast.
- ♥ Notice early signs of hunger. Nurse at the first signs of hunger, such as when your baby opens his mouth wide or puts his fists in his mouth. This will allow you to nurse before your baby gets so hungry that he is upset. A calm baby is more likely to latch on and nurse well.
- ♥ Nurse on the less sore breast first. Your baby's suck is often strongest at the start of the feeding. When you switch to the other breast, your baby's suck will most likely feel more comfortable.
- ♥ Remove a small amount of milk. Try to hand express or pump a little milk to soften the breast tissue if it is hard for your baby to latch onto your breast.
- ♥ Break suction before taking your baby off of the breast. If your baby has not released suction, gently put your little finger in the corner of your baby's mouth, between her gums.
- ♥ Express your milk if you are too sore to have the baby nurse. If you feel too uncomfortable to nurse your baby, hand express or use a pump to remove milk from your breast. Save the milk that you collect to use for a feeding when you are away from your baby.

Tips for treating sore nipples...

- ♥ Use breast milk to help heal your nipples. Express a small amount of milk after your baby has finished feeding, gently rub it on your nipples, and allow to dry. This will help protect and heal your skin.
- ♥ Purified lanolin can be used to ease soreness and promote healing. Apply a thin coat of purified lanolin (such as Lansinoh or Tender Care Lanolin) to the nipple after each nursing. This does **not** need to be washed off before the next feeding.
- ♥ Avoid soaps and body creams. Soaps can dry your nipples and get in the way of your body's natural lubricant.
- ♥ If you use breast pads, change them often. If your milk leaks between feedings, breast pads can make you more comfortable and help keep your nipples dry. Change the pads each time they become damp, since damp pads can make your nipples more chapped and sore.

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Easing Nipple Soreness

Tips for Successful Breastfeeding



Breastfeeding Notes: