



Sore nipples

Why do some mothers get sore nipples?

When babies are first learning to breastfeed, they sometimes have trouble opening their mouths wide enough to get a comfortable latch. If baby continues to nurse without a wide, comfortable latch, nipple damage can develop. Babies also may have trouble latching if mothers have breast swelling from engorgement or a long labor.

The first step is to work with your lactation consultant to help your baby learn to latch, so that he or she doesn't continue to injure your nipples.

Baby-led latch

Watch your baby – when she's licking her lips, touching her fingers to her mouth, or turning her head from side to side, she's thinking about eating. Get into a comfortable, well-supported position, and settle your baby where she's close to your breast. Babies who are ready to eat will feel the nipple on their chin, open their mouths, and latch. All you need to do is support her head and shoulders. If you notice discomfort once the baby latches, adjust her position, and yours, until it's comfortable for both of you.

To see how this works, watch, "Your baby knows how to latch on," at <http://www.ameda.com/breastfeeding/elibrary/videos.aspx>

Helping your nipples heal

We recommend a non-irritating moisturizer to help your nipples heal. After each feed / pumping, apply Petrolatum (Vaseline, Aquaphor or generic equivalent) or Zinc Oxide to both nipples and wear a cotton bra. If the ointment is sticking to your clothes, you may want to cover it with gauze.

If you still see ointment before the next feed, you can wash off your nipples with water and Cetaphil gentle cleanser (or generic equivalent). We don't recommend using any other ointments or soap on your nipples. Don't use Soothies or Hydrogels if you are putting any kind of ointment or cream on your nipples.

What pain medications are safe during breastfeeding?

To help relieve your pain, it's safe to take Acetaminophen (Tylenol) 650-1000 mg every 4 to 6 hours (but no more than 4000 mg – or 8 extra-strength pills – per day) or Ibuprofen (Motrin) 400-600 mg every 6 hours.

When you should start to feel better

Call the Lactation Warmline at 984-974-8078 or 866-428-5608 if you have any additional concerns or if you are not starting to feel better in 2-3 days.