

Mastitis

Symptoms

- Mother has fever
- An area on the breast is red and painful
- Mother has flu-like symptoms (achy feeling)
- Milk production has declined
- Baby may not be interested in nursing on that side
- Mother has a previous plugged duct that never fully resolved

Prevention

- Ensure a good latch
- Breastfeed at least 8 times every 24 hours, and every time the baby shows signs of hunger
- Let the baby release the breast to end the feed
- Avoid long intervals between feeds
- Follow basic engorgement prevention recommendations
- If plugged duct arises, treat aggressively
- Avoid tight clothing or other things that can press against sensitive milk ducts (ex: shoulder strap in the car, purse or diaper bag strap, too tight bra, or pulling bra over the breast to breastfeed)
- Ask for help from family and friends for non-infant-care chores
- Rest and drink plenty of fluids and avoid overdoing it

Simple Comfort Measures

Before the Feed:

- Apply warm (not hot) compresses over the affected area

During the Feed:

- Breastfeed on both breasts, beginning with the affected breast
- Begin feeding on the side with the plugged duct
- Gently massage the lumpy area while baby is feeding

After the Feed:

- Remove milk by hand or with a quality breast pump if breast is still uncomfortably full
- REST.
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Be vigilant about hand washing

Other Things to Keep in Mind:

- Baby can continue to breastfeed
- Do not stop breastfeeding. Breasts need to be well drained
- Put the baby to breast whenever he shows signs of hunger
- Always contact the doctor if mother is running a fever or has flu-like symptoms; encourage her to consult her physician if symptoms do not improve after beginning an antibiotic regimen

Yield When:

Mother reports fever and/or flu-like symptoms, or a reddened area on her breast



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Arizona Department of Health Services 2015