

PLUGGED DUCTS

Having a plugged duct is common for many women while breastfeeding. A plugged duct is a small milk duct that was not properly drained. The milk duct becomes inflamed and blocked. You will feel a tender spot or lump in one of your breasts filled with thick milk¹. This goes away after breastfeeding. There is no danger to your baby if you have a plugged duct. You can still breastfeed².

Moms with large breasts may have difficulties getting a good latch. If your baby isn't latching properly, your breast will not fully drain. Milk then becomes backed up. You may become engorged with plugged ducts. You may also develop mastitis which is an infection of the breast.³

COMMON CAUSES⁴⁻⁶:

- Missed feedings can prevent the milk duct from being drained.
- Breast feeding less often will prevent milk from being expressed.
- Wearing a bra with an underwire or one that is too tight can cut off the flow in your milk duct.
- Sleeping on the stomach may put extra pressure on the breast and cut off flow.

If you have a plugged duct, you may feel pain before feedings, during milk release and less pain after feedings.

TIPS OF THE WEEK

- A lump in your breast filled with thick milk can be a sign of a plugged duct. Continue to breastfeed. Your breast milk is still good.
- Moms with large breasts may have difficulty getting a good latch.
- For immediate relief, use a cold compress to alleviate pain.

For immediate relief⁴⁻⁶:

- Apply warm and moist compress 5-6 times a day (10-15min before breastfeeding)
- Lightly massage the breast just in front of the tender area to help the milk flow
- Massage toward the nipple while feeding.
- If the duct does not clear, wear a soft bra or no bra to take pressure off of the breast

Other steps:

- Breastfeed or pump (at least every 2hrs)
- Start with the sore side to help loosen up the plugged duct.
- Point the baby's chin toward the plugged duct. This will help empty the area.
- Change breastfeeding positions often
- If no improvements within 24 hours and you have a fever above 101 degrees, go to urgent care or to your doctor³.

The health care law, (Affordable Care Act) requires most health insurance plans to provide breastfeeding equipment and counseling for pregnant and nursing women. You may be covered for a breast pump and visits with

a lactation consultant through your medical insurance plan, WIC or Medi-Cal. Contact your insurance plan for questions about your breastfeeding benefits.

IF YOU NEED BREASTFEEDING HELP, CALL THE HELP LINE: 888-278-6455

RESOURCES:

womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/common-challenges/

kellymom.com/bf/concerns/mother/mastitis/

whattoexpect.com/plugged-milk-ducts.aspx

VIDEO: CLOGGED MILK

youtube.com/watch?v=1IRuQMOTzEk&feature=youtube_gdata_player

BLOGS:

BREASTFEEDING MOMS UNITE

breastfeedingmomsunite.com/

BREASTFEEDINGINC.

breastfeedinginc.ca/content.php?pagename=videos

LA LECHE LEAGUE (MOTHER-TO-MOTHER FORUMS)

forums.llli.org/

LA LECHE LEAGUE (RESOURCE WEBPAGE)

llli.org/resources.html

THE LEAKY BOOB

theleakyboob.com/#blank

SAN DIEGO BREASTFEEDING CENTER

sdbfc.com/blog/

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