



Breastfeeding Challenges

Did You Know?

Colorado law requires that employers provide breaks and privacy for mothers to pump breast milk at work.

Breast milk pumped at work should be stored properly for later use.

- Refrigerated: good for 3-7 days
- Frozen: recommended use within 6 months

Make sure to discuss your breastfeeding needs with your supervisor so they can best arrange for added breaks and a private space for pumping.

Breastfeeding is a rewarding experience that can improve the health of both mother and baby. Although breastfeeding is one of the healthiest options for feeding a baby, many mothers run into challenges that make it difficult to breastfeed. Here are some common challenges experienced by breastfeeding mothers and suggestions for dealing with them.

Common Breastfeeding Challenges

Sore Nipples

Sore and tender nipples result from improper feeding position or latch-on of the infant to the nipple.

Suggestions:

- Consult your physician about strategies to help your baby latch properly.
- Avoid wearing tight clothing or bras that can further irritate the nipples.

Low Milk Supply

Women are often concerned they have low milk supply when their infants seem to want more milk or their breasts do not feel full. These concerns do not necessarily mean milk supply is low. If you are still concerned, there are several ways to increase milk production and ensure your child is full.

Suggestions:

- Nurse more often and offer both breasts during feeding.
- Make sure to rest, eat a healthy diet, and drink plenty of fluids.
- Avoid giving your baby cereal or formula because it can lower interest in breast milk and/or the frequency of breastfeeding, thereby decreasing milk production.

Oversupply of Milk

Some mothers produce too much milk, which can be uncomfortable for both the mother and baby.

Suggestions:

- Breastfeed on one side for each feeding and increase the time of each feeding.
- Release extra breast milk; apply a cold pack to reduce swelling.



Plugged Milk Duct

Inflamed ducts that have not been drained are common when feedings are skipped. With plugged milk ducts, the breast may feel sore and a lump could be present.

Suggestions:

- Gently massage the plugged milk duct and apply a warm compress.
- Continue breastfeeding, wear loose-fitting bras, and sleep with your feet up.

Breast Infection

Inflammation, tenderness, and a lump on the breast are symptoms of breast infections. These infections are not as common as plugged milk ducts.

Suggestions:

- Contact your doctor if it lasts longer than 24 hours and if you have a fever or flu-like symptoms.
- Use the same suggestions for a plugged milk duct.

Fungal Infection

A fungal infection can form around the mother's nipples or inside the breasts. Sore, pink, flaky, shiny, or cracked nipples are signs of a fungal infection. Infants may be infected as well if they have white spots inside their mouths, refuse feedings, or act cranky.

Suggestions:

- Keep nursing items clean, washing or boiling them in hot water (above 122°F).
- Call your doctor if you have or your infant has signs of a fungal infection.

Refusal to Breastfeed

Reasons the infant may not want to feed include ear infections, pain from feeding position, cold or stuffy nose, distraction while feeding, reduced milk supply, or a change from a normal routine.

Suggestions:

- Try to keep a consistent schedule and feed when the baby is hungry.
- Be patient when feeding your infant and comfort him/her with your touch.
- Experiment with different feeding positions and places that have little distractions.

Do not let any of these possible challenges with breastfeeding stop you forming a priceless bond between you and your infant. Using these suggestions can ensure comfort and enjoyment for both you and your child.

