



Breastfeeding
Committee
for Saskatchewan

www.thebcs.ca

IMPORTANT

- Continue breastfeeding
- Baby will not get sick from mastitis
- Call your doctor or health care provider if symptoms become worse or continue for more than 24 hours

For further information contact:

Local Public Health Nurse

International Board Certified
Lactation Consultant (IBCLC)

Local breastfeeding support
Group

Saskatchewan HealthLine 811

MASTITIS

What is mastitis?

Mastitis is infection of the breast tissue and/or milk ducts.

Mastitis may be caused by:

- a sudden decrease in the number of feedings
- an untreated plugged milk duct
- being overtired and/or increased stress
- cracked nipples

Signs and symptoms of mastitis

- usually comes on suddenly
- mom has flu-like symptoms such as feeling tired, headache, muscle aches, fever (temperature more than 38°C) and chills
- breast may be red, hot and swollen (if caused by a blocked duct, there will be a hardened tender area that worsens)
- pain may be intense in one area of the breast

What can you do?

- Approximately 30 minutes prior to breastfeeding, you may want to take a Tylenol or Advil to help relieve pain and/or fever.
- Before putting baby to breast:
 - apply warm moist cloths to the sore area
 - gently massage the breast
- Wear a well-fitted bra that does not have any pressure areas (avoid bras with an underwire).
- Get extra rest. Mastitis is often the first sign that mom is doing too much. Try to lay on your back or your unaffected side if possible.
- Breastfeed often, at least every 2 hours. The baby will not get sick from this infection.
- Breastfeed on the sore side first, at each feeding.
- Try different nursing positions.
- Make sure baby is well latched and is sucking well at the breast. Use breast compression if not too uncomfortable.
- If baby is not emptying the breasts hand express or pump after feeding.
<http://newborns.stanford.edu/Breastfeeding/HandExpression.html>
- Use heat for treatment on affected area: warm bath or shower, warm wet packs, heating pad, hot water bottle, microwave heat pack, etc.



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- You may consider using lecithin, a food supplement, which decreases the stickiness of the milk decreasing the incidence of blocked ducts to help prevent blocked ducts.

References:

1. Newman, J. & Kenerman, E.
Blocked Ducts & Mastitis.
Breastfeeding Inc. Retrieved
from
<https://www.breastfeedinginc.ca/print.php?pagename=doc-BD-M>
2. Stanford School of Medicine.
Hand Expression of Breastmilk.
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