

# Mastitis in Breastfeeding

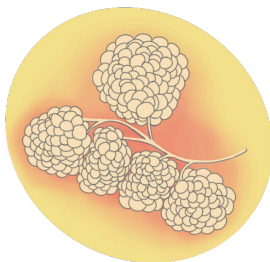
## General Information:

- Mastitis is inflammation of the breast. You may have redness, pain, and swelling.
- Most cases of mastitis resolve by treating inflammation (see below). Antibiotics are not needed in most cases.
- Milk is made and stored in groups of milk sacs called “lobules.” Milk is not stored in ducts.
- Painful lumps are caused by full milk sacs. Ducts become narrow from swelling around them. Milk may flow slowly but there is no “plug.” Squeezing will not help.
- Engorgement refers to breasts with very full milk sacs. It is not mastitis.
- Skipping feeding or pumping may cause redness and discomfort. This is not infection. This is inflammation.

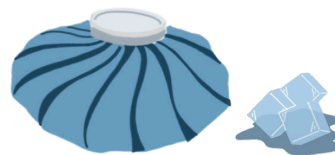
## Treatment:

- Use ice or cold compresses. Cold reduces pain and inflammation. Cold helps like it helps a sprained ankle.
- Use anti-inflammatory and pain-relieving medications: ibuprofen and acetaminophen (paracetamol).
- Wear a supportive bra to help swelling.
- Deep massage and squeezing will cause injury and make the inflammation worse.
- Do not feed more or express more milk on the side with the problem.
- Stop feeding or pumping if no milk is flowing. The swelling must improve first.
- Contact your healthcare provider if you do not feel better in 24 hours.
- Breastfeeding and breast milk are safe with mastitis, abscesses, and taking antibiotics.

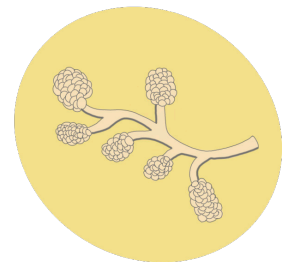
With inflammation, milk sacs are large and lumpy. Cold compresses decrease swelling.



*Inflamed*



*Ice*



*Healthy*

## Abscesses and Milk Cysts:

- An abscess is a collection of pus (infected fluid).
- A milk cyst (galactocele) is a collection of milk.
- Abscesses and milk cysts often occur with too much milk production (hyperlactation).
- An abscess will need to be drained. A milk cyst will not need drainage if it is small. You can still breastfeed from the breast with the abscess or cyst, even before drainage.

## Prevention:

- Avoid pumping if possible when you have mastitis or related symptoms. Pumping can injure breasts and nipples.
- Feed at the breast or hand express when possible.
- Do not pump large amounts of milk to store.
- Avoid nipple shields.
- If you have too much milk (hyperlactation), get help to reduce milk production.