

ENGORGEMENT

Engorgement is when your breasts feel extremely full and become very hard and painful. It is the overfilling of milk in the breast. Engorgement can also happen anytime while you are breastfeeding. Continue to breastfeed to release the milk^{1,2}.

- Moms with large breasts may have difficulties getting a good latch. If your baby isn't latching properly, your breast will not fully drain.
- Delayed or missed feedings can lead to incomplete emptying of the breast.
- Scheduled feedings instead of feeding on demand can also lead to incomplete emptying of the breast.

Weaning may lead to engorgement. Start slow and taper off gradually to prevent engorgement.

It is normal to see breast fullness 2-4 days postpartum³. Breasts become fuller, heavier, and larger as colostrum changes to mature milk. It is not normal for breasts to be hard, warm, red, painful, throbbing. When breasts are engorged, milk does not transfer well and fluid and milk build up.

HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Breastfeed as often as possible (every 2-3 hours, 8-12 times in 24hrs)^{4,5}.
- Try hand expression or pumping to release the over-supply of milk (Refer to the

TIPS OF THE WEEK

- Engorgement is most common during the early days of postpartum when mom and baby are learning how to breastfeed.
- Continuous breastfeeding will help reduce engorgement.
- Moms with large breast size may have problems with proper latching and feeding, which may cause engorgement.

Breastfeeding and Pumping lesson for more information)⁶.

- If your breasts are still hard, apply a cold compress or cold cabbage leaves on your breasts for 10-15 minutes for relief.
- Ibuprofen may help reduce the pain and swelling in your breasts. You can continue to breastfeeding while taking this.
- If there are no improvements in 24-hrs, contact a lactation consultant or healthcare provider.
- Engorgement can cause an increase in your temperature⁷. Call your doctor immediately if:
 - You have a fever of 100.4 degrees or above.
 - You have a red and warm area on breast

Remember, you may be covered for a breast pump and visits with a lactation consultant through your medical insurance plan, WIC, Medicaid or the Affordable Care Act.

HOW CAN I TELL IF MY BREASTS ARE FULL OR ENGORGED?

NORMAL BREAST FULLNESS

ENGORGED BREASTS

Mild discomfort	Very painful
Baby can latch easily	Baby cannot latch easily
Softer after feeding	Still firm after feeding
Skin normal	Skin tight and shiny
Firm and full	Hard and lumpy
Warm	Hot
Good milk flow	Poor milk flow

Comprehensive Perinatal Services (CPSP). Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

RESOURCES:

See Choose Health LA Moms Breastfeeding Resources for more information.

ndhealth.gov/familyhealth/publications/Engorgement.pdf

whattoexpect.com/pregnancy/symptoms-and-solutions/breast-engorgement.aspx

breastfeedingbasics.com/articles/engorgement

kellymom.com/bf/concerns/mother/engorgement/

VIDEO: HOW TO AVOID ENGORGEMENT

youtube.com/watch?v=aG6qU90KEzw&feature=youtube_gdata_player

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

BLOGS:

everydayfamily.com/blog/

pumpstationblog.blogspot.com/

lactconnect.blogspot.com/

APPS:

BREASTFEEDING EXPERIENCE

itunes.apple.com/us/app/breastfeeding-experience/id522046543?mt=8

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