

## MASTITIS (BREAST INFECTION)

Breast infection, also known as mastitis (mast-EYE-tiss) is a bacterial infection in your breast, not your milk supply. Mastitis can occur at any time but usually happens in the first 2-3 months after breastfeeding<sup>1</sup>.

Mastitis occurs in about 10% of mothers who breastfeed<sup>2,3</sup>. Between 75 and 95% of cases occur before the infant is 3 months old<sup>2</sup>. It is equally common in the right and left breast. You may feel intense soreness or a lump in one of your breasts along with a fever or flu-like symptoms. Your breasts may become red, very warm, and tender.

### COMMON CAUSES<sup>4</sup>:

- An untreated plugged duct.
- Cracked or damaged nipples.
- Skipped feedings can lead to engorgement which leads to mastitis

### WARNING SIGNS<sup>5</sup>:

- You may have a red, swollen, hot and painful area on breast. It is usually only in one breast.
- You may have yellow pus coming from your nipple and in your milk that looks like colostrum. (Your milk is still good and will not harm your baby)

### TIPS OF THE WEEK

- Continue to breastfeed or pump regularly. Your breast milk is still good!
- Mastitis occurs in about 10% of mothers who breastfeed.
- If you are diagnosed with mastitis your doctor will give you antibiotics.

- You may have a fever of 101 degrees or higher and feel weak or very achy.
- Some women may experience nausea or vomiting.

### HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- You need to see your doctor because treatment for mastitis requires antibiotics. Your doctor will prescribe antibiotics if your symptoms have not cleared up within 24-48 hours. Make sure to take them for the full 10 days or as directed. Apply a warm cloth on the affected area to help the flow of milk<sup>6,7</sup>
- Continue to breastfeed or pump often as every 2 hours. It helps clear up the infection. Your breast milk is still good!
- Get as much rest as you can. Have someone help to care for your baby.

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/#f](http://womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/common-challenges/#f)

[mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/mastitis/basics/definition/con-20026633](http://mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/mastitis/basics/definition/con-20026633)

[webmd.com/parenting/baby/tc/mastitis-while-breast-feeding-topic-overview](http://webmd.com/parenting/baby/tc/mastitis-while-breast-feeding-topic-overview)

### VIDEO: BREAST INFECTION

[youtube.com/watch?v=zTK1OcMjc4&feature=youtube\\_gdata\\_player](http://youtube.com/watch?v=zTK1OcMjc4&feature=youtube_gdata_player)

## BLOGS:

[babyfriendlynl.ca/blog/my-mastitis-experience/](http://babyfriendlynl.ca/blog/my-mastitis-experience/)

[whattoexpect.com/blogs/theycallmemommy/death-by-mastitis](http://whattoexpect.com/blogs/theycallmemommy/death-by-mastitis)

[circleofmoms.com/breastfeeding-moms/mastitis-keeps-returning-361973](http://circleofmoms.com/breastfeeding-moms/mastitis-keeps-returning-361973)

## APPS:

### BREASTFEEDING EXPERIENCE

[itunes.apple.com/us/app/breastfeeding-experience/id5292046543?mt=8](http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/breastfeeding-experience/id5292046543?mt=8)

## REFERENCES

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7. Walker, Marsha. (2013). *Breastfeeding Management for the Clinician: Using the Evidence*. 3rd Ed. Jones and Bartlett Publishers. Weston, MA.