



Wyoming
Department
of Health

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Wyoming Healthy Together Program
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Breast Care After Birth

A few days after your baby's birth, your breasts will swell with milk. They are likely to feel tender and heavy. This is normal. To help prevent breast soreness and control irritation, follow these tips:

Coping with Swelling

- Use moist heat to help reduce the ache.
- Breastfeed often to keep milk from clogging your breast ducts.
- Squeeze out a few drops of milk if your breasts are so full that your nipples flatten.
- The best way to control breast problems is to keep your milk flowing. Infections in the breast (**mastitis**) most often occur when milk collects and inflames the breast's fatty tissue.
- If infection does occur, your milk should still be fine for baby.

Preventing Sore Nipples

- Make sure baby latches on to your breast correctly. The baby's tongue should always be under your nipple.
- Rinse your breasts with clean water after each feeding. Let them air-dry.
- Do not use alcohol, soap, or scented cleansers on your breasts. These can cause the nipples to dry and crack.
- Do not wear nursing pads that are lined with plastic. They hold in moisture and cause chapping.

Choosing a Good Bra

Wearing the right size bra is especially important now. If a bra is too tight, it may cause a duct in your breast to clog and become irritated. If possible, have a salesperson help fit you for a new bra. Look for one that's 100% cotton and without underwires. Also, choose a bra with wide straps that won't dig into your back and shoulders. If you're breastfeeding, find a nursing bra that allows you to uncover one breast at a time.

If you are not breastfeeding:

- Avoid stimulation of nipples
- Wear a tight-fitting bra
- Apply ice packs for discomfort

Call your healthcare provider if you have any of the following:

- A fever or chills
- Extreme tiredness and body aches, as if you have the flu

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Moist heat, like a shower, helps to reduce pain from swelling.



Baby's tongue should always be under your nipple.