

# Breastfeeding...

## Overcoming Challenges

### Engorgement

**What it is:** Painful, swollen breasts that are overfull of milk.

**What causes it:** It can happen to a mild degree as the milk first begins to come in. However, if the baby continues to not remove all of the milk from the breasts it can become quite painful and interfere with milk production.

**Signs and Symptoms:**

- Hard feeling breasts
- Tightly stretched skin that may look shiny
- Feelings of warmth, tenderness and/or throbbing

**How to treat it:**

- Breastfeed often!
- Breast massage
- Try reverse pressure softening (ask your lactation consultant)
- Cool compresses up to 20 minutes before feeding
- Warm compresses immediately before feeding
- Cabbage leaves
- Pumping as needed

**Can I still breastfeed:** Yes, the BEST and most effective treatment for engorgement is frequent feedings with full milk removal during feeds!

### Clogged Ducts

**What it is:** Lumps of milk that you can feel in the breast.

**What causes it:** Excess pressure on certain areas of the breast from underwire bras, tight tank tops, seatbelts etc.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Feeling a small lump in the breast, like a frozen pea.

**How to treat it:**

- Massage
- Warmth by using heating pad, compress, or warm water bath
- Frequent, effective nursing
- Avoid excess pressure on the breasts

**Can I still breastfeed:** Yes!

### Mastitis

**What it is:** Breast inflammation. Usually caused by an infection in the breasts.

**What causes it:** It is caused most frequently by bacteria and the breast tissue becomes infected. Can result from nipple damage from a bad latch.

**Signs and Symptoms:**

- Painful lump in the breast
- Breast redness and/or excess warmth
- Breast tenderness
- Systemic symptoms like fever and chills

**How to treat it:** Needs to be treated by a doctor as antibiotics are needed to kill the infection!

**Can I still breastfeed:** In most cases, yes. Continuing to breastfeed will keep the breast soft and comfortable.

### Thrush

**What it is:** An overgrowth of bacteria normally present on the skin.

**What causes it:** No specific cause, nothing the mother has done wrong.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Can be little or no symptoms.

For mother:

- Itchy, flaky, shiny skin on the nipple and breast
- Nipple stinging or pain

For baby:

- Fussiness
- White spots in the mouth

**How to treat it:**

Mother and baby both need treatment at the same time! Treated with prescriptions. Important to clean items such as toys, pacifiers and pump parts because yeast can live on these items.

**Can I still breastfeed:** Yes!