

Engorgement

Definition-

Several days after birth, the milk supply increases and some breast fullness is normal during this time. Engorgement occurs when the breasts are not drained often enough and extra blood, lymph and other fluids build up in the breasts.

Signs and Symptoms-

- Painful breast swelling caused by other fluids not just breastmilk
- Breasts that are very hard and firm
- Red or hot breasts
- Nipples are very firm and flat and baby cannot latch on properly
- Does not always mean too much milk

Causes-

- Not feeding often enough
- Limiting length or frequency of feedings
- Supplemental bottles or pacifiers
- Poor latching techniques

Treatment-

- GET THE MILK OUT!
- Apply warm compresses to the breast and hand express or pump to soften the breasts enough for the baby to latch on
- Breastfeed frequently at least every 1.2-2 hours during the day and no longer than 3 hours at night
- If your breasts are still full after feedings, you can pump long enough to soften them to comfort (Pumping will not make engorgement worse)
- Ice packs for 10-15 minutes after feedings may reduce swelling or you can try cabbage leaves
- To use cabbage, put a chilled cabbage leaf in your bra for 1-2 hours, or until they become limp and wilted. Remove them and attempt to breastfeed or pump. Repeat if necessary.

When to call your Doctor or Lactation Consultant-

- Above treatments do not work or you cannot express any milk
- Engorgement persists for longer than 24 hours
- You have a fever, chilling, or flu-like symptoms
- The baby will not latch on

References-

Lawrence, Ruth. "Breastfeeding- A Guide for the Medical Profession" 6th edition. Pgs. 278-281

Wilson-Clay, Barbara, Hoover, Kay. "The Breastfeeding Atlas" 3rd edition. Pgs. 109-111

Sore Nipples

Definition-

Sore nipples are any persistent pain in the nipples that lasts throughout the entire breastfeeding or hurts between feedings.

Signs and Symptoms-

- Pain when the baby latches on that lasts longer than 30 seconds
- Cracking
- Blisters
- Bleeding
- Nipples that are tender between feedings

Causes-

- **BABY NOT LATCHING ON PROPERLY-** is the number one cause of sore nipples
- Engorgement that makes the nipple too flat and firm to latch properly
- Early pacifier and bottle usage
- Sucking problems in the baby
- Infections in the nipple or breast
- Inappropriate nipple care routines or attempting to “toughen up” the nipples before the baby is born
- Improper breastpump usage

Treatment-

- Make sure the baby is latching properly with a wide open mouth and the nipple landing far back in the infant’s mouth near the soft palate
- If you are unsure whether or not your baby is latching properly or your nipples look pinched or creases after feedings, contact a lactation consultant to receive help
- Keep nipples clean by rinsing with clear water or a sterile saline solution after feedings
- Allow nipples to air dry and then apply medical grade USP modified Lanolin

When to call your Doctor or Lactation Consultant-

- Sore nipples continue for more than 2-3 days with better latching techniques
- Nipples are cracked, bleeding, or have drainage that may have an odor
- Fever, aching or chilling
- Infant has thrush (patchy, white coating on the tongue, cheeks or lips)
- Pumping hurts

References-

Mohrbacher, Nancy, Stock, Julie. “The Breastfeeding Answer Book” 3rd Edition. Pgs. 456-465

Wilson-Clay, Barbara, Hoover, Kay. “The Breastfeeding Atlas” 3rd edition. Pgs. 61-71