

Mastitis

Mastitis is an infection of the breast around the milk ducts. Symptoms may include:

- A painful, reddened, warm, or hard area on your breast
- A fever of 101F or above
- Chills
- Feeling very tired
- Headache
- Achiness all over your body

If you do not start to feel better call your health care provider, you may need an antibiotic.

Try the following:

- Feed your baby or pump in a quiet relaxing place
- Put moist heat on the breast or take a warm shower before pumping or feeding your baby
- Gently massage and stroke the breast toward the nipple to help the milk flow during feedings and pumping
- Breastfeed on the involved side first. This helps empty the breast better
- Change your baby's position at each feeding (cradle, side-sitting, lying down, football) to empty the breasts better
- If your baby is having a hard time latching and breastfeeding well, try pumping the breast instead. It is safe for the milk to be given to the baby
- Use a high-quality double electric breast pump. Pump every 3 hours for 10-15 minutes to empty breasts

Other helpful hints:

- If your doctor gives you an antibiotic, take them as directed. Make sure to finish all the pills even if you start to feel better
- Rest every time your baby sleeps, at least for the next day as you heal
- Drink when you are thirsty, your body needs more fluids when you have a fever
- You may use acetaminophen (Tylenol) or Ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) for pain as needed. Check with your primary care doctor
- It is important to remove milk from your breasts during treatment to prevent more issues. Weaning at this time is not recommended
- Take care of yourself. Get plenty of rest, eat a well-balanced diet, drink plenty of fluids, and ask for help with your baby and with chores around the house

Call the Children's Mercy Hospital Breastfeeding and Pumping helpline at (816) 346-1309 if you have questions or concerns.

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