

# Breast Care for Nursing Mothers



Breast-feeding your baby is one of the most fulfilling experiences in life. But if nursing leaves your breasts tender and sore, satisfaction gives way to discomfort. Proper breast care can minimize this problem, though.

- Wear good support bras throughout your pregnancy.
- Wear a nursing bra day and night as long as your baby is breastfeeding.
- Avoid wearing bras that have a plastic liner.
- Change your bra or breast pads when they become damp or wet.
- Alternate breasts when nursing.
- Avoid nursing your baby more than 20 minutes at a time on each breast.
- Don't pull the baby away from your breast. Instead, break the suction by gently inserting your finger between the baby's mouth and your breast.
- Expect some temporary swelling for the first few days you breast-feed. Warm showers and ice packs can relieve discomfort.
- Wash your breasts daily, using warm water and a soft cloth. Don't use soap; it can dry your skin and irritate your breasts.

If your breasts are red, inflamed, and painful despite precautions, consult your doctor.