



Sore Nipples

Overview

In the early days of breastfeeding, some tenderness is normal. It may be uncomfortable for the first 10-20 seconds after latching, but that should improve and pain throughout a feeding is not normal. Once breastfeeding is established, any nipple soreness should be investigated for causes and how to treat it!

Possible Causes

1. Poor latch or positioning ** (most common cause)
2. Improper use of a nipple shield
3. Improper use of pump
4. Medical Conditions - yeast, Raynauds, infection, etc.
5. Variations in baby's oral anatomy.

Treatments

1. Ensure proper alignment! Baby should be tummy to tummy, at breast level, and line up baby's nose with your nipple to latch.
2. Ensure proper latch! Baby should be well supported at the breast, ensuring lips flanged out and entire nipple and as much of areola as possible into mouth.
3. When using a nipple shield, make sure your nipple appears rounded under the shield after a feeding, and a wide latch still needs to be obtained when using. Baby's lips should be all the way to the base of the nipple shield when latched.
4. When using a pump, ensure correct flange size is used, and suction is not too high. Should be felt but not uncomfortable! Higher suction doesn't = more milk.
5. When unlatching baby, make sure you break suction with a finger before pulling baby off the breast.
6. Start feeds on least sore side first.
7. Once the latch is corrected, rotate positioning for feeds to allow pressure sore spots to heal.
8. Apply colostrum, lanolin, coconut oil, or other advertised nipple cream after feeds.
9. Breast shells to allow nipples space to dry can be helpful.

If nipple pain is persistent, it is best to reach out to the Lactation Consultants to help, pain is never something you should just "tough it out!"