

# Sore Nipples and Nipple Pain



## What causes sore nipples and nipple pain?

It is common for a woman's nipples to feel sore or tender in the first few days of breastfeeding. This is caused by a postpartum hormonal shift and your body adjusting to breastfeeding. Nipple tenderness should get better after about a week. However, nipple pain while breastfeeding is never normal and is a sign that something is not right. This is often caused when a baby is not latching deeply enough.

## What are the signs and symptoms?

- Feelings of pinching, rubbing, biting or pain when your baby is latching.
- Cracks, blisters, bleeding or bruising on your nipples or areola.
- A nipple that looks pinched when your baby comes off the breast.

## What if nipple pain is caused by the pump?

- Make sure your flanges fit correctly. Your nipple should not rub against the sides of the flange when pumping and your areola should not be pulled into the flange. There are different flange sizes available, so talk to a lactation consultant if you are not sure what size you need.
- Find a level of suction that is comfortable. Higher suction does not mean you will get more milk and can actually cause less milk to flow due to pain.

## What might help?

- Try latching your baby more deeply onto the breast. Hold your baby with their nose across from your nipple and their chin dug deeply into your breast. When they open their mouth widely, quickly bring their upper lip up and over your nipple.
- You'll know the latch is deep when:
  - Your baby's mouth is opened widely on your breast and their lips are flared out like a fish.
  - You feel a pull-tug, but no pain, while your baby is nursing.
  - Your nipple is elongated and round after your baby comes off your breast.

### If you need help with latching:

- Call your WIC clinic and speak to a lactation consultant or breastfeeding peer counselor. They can provide help, including a pumping plan to protect your milk supply and tips to get the deepest latch possible.
- Speak to your health care provider or call the free 24/7 Texas Lactation Support Hotline at **855-550-6667**.

**Find more tips at [BreastmilkCounts.com](https://BreastmilkCounts.com).**

For free 24/7 information and support, call the Texas Lactation Support Hotline at 855-550-6667 to speak with a lactation consultant.

**WIC has resources, healthy foods and more. Apply here:**



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