

# Mister Lactation Doctor

## Mastitis: Prevention and Treatment

**Mastitis** is an inflammation or infection of the breast. It tends to appear on a single breast with a red, hot, swollen and tender area. A fever, chills or flu-like body aches may also occur.

### Mastitis Risk Factors:

- Engorgement and stasis of milk.
- Plugged ducts.
- Damaged nipples – allows for bacteria to enter the breast tissue.
- Stress and fatigue.
- Previous mastitis infection.
- Strong milk supply and a decrease in pumping/feeding – this can lead to engorgement, stasis of milk and plugged ducts.

### Treatments:

- Effective milk removal – **THE MILK IS SAFE FOR BABY**. Don't decrease the amount of feeds/pumping/expression of milk.
- Antibiotics, if symptoms are severe or haven't cleared within 24 hours.
- Perform a lymphatic massage towards the nipple during feeds, and away from the nipple, towards the armpit, between feeds (you can watch a demonstration of the appropriate technique in my corresponding YouTube video).
- Use ibuprofen/advil, as needed, if you have no contraindications to this medication.
- Position the infant so that their chin or nose is pointing towards the plug/painful area.

- Warm compress to area before feeds.
- Cold compress to area after feeds.
- Nipple cream, if there is damage to the nipple.
- Relaxation strategies for stress relief.

Individuals treated with antibiotics should start improving in 24-48 hours. If this does not occur, a milk culture might be required for analysis and you should seek a follow-up medical assessment. A lack of response to antibiotics could indicate a resistant bacterial infection, a breast abscess (a collection of pus in the breast) or certain types of breast cancer.

Always remember, you are doing a wonderful job!

Take care,



**Mister Lactation Doctor**  
**Dr. Brian Hartman MD, CCFP**

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