

Mister Lactation Doctor

Yeast Infection of the Nipple and Breast

A yeast infection can occur while breastfeeding and can affect either mom, baby or both. A yeast infection can manifest with your baby, in your nipples or in your breasts. Fortunately, if you know the signs to be aware of, a yeast infection can be easily managed.

Yeast Infection Risk Factors:

- Antibiotic use in mom or baby.
- Previous history of yeast infections
- Oral yeast infection in babies (thrush).
- Diaper rash in babies due to a yeast infection.
- Pacifiers and bottle nipples can be a source of yeast, so be sure to replace or boil after each use.

Signs and Symptoms:

- Pain occurring at the end of feeds.
- Pain is more of a burning sensation.
- Shooting pains from the nipple up the breast (not the same sensation as milk let down)
- Shiny or flaky skin on the nipple/areola.
- Baby may have signs of a yeast infection (oral thrush, diaper rash).

There is some debate on what is the best approach to treatment of yeast infections in the breastfeeding dyad. The following is my approach:

If baby is infected and mom has no signs → treat both mom and baby.

If mom and baby are infected → treat both mom and baby.

If mom is infected with baby having no signs → treat mom only.

Treatment for baby is an antifungal to the infected area of the body. For nipple yeast, mothers can apply a nipple cream with anti-fungal properties until infection resolution. If the infection persists, mothers can trial an oral antifungal.

Yeast infections of the nipple and breast can be difficult to diagnose and treat, so being assessed by a lactation specialist or physician is prudent for appropriate assessment and management.

Always remember, you are doing a wonderful job!

Take care,



Mister Lactation Doctor
Dr. Brian Hartman MD, CCFP

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