

# Cracked Nipples

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## What causes a cracked nipple?

Cracked nipples can be caused by a many things, but it's usually due to a poor latch or ill fitting flange. They are often accompanied with pain or bleeding.

## How is a crack treated?

Here are some suggestions to help discourage infection and promote healing

- Wash nipples 2x a day with gentle soap and water
- Dip nipple in a warm saline bath of 2 tablespoons of salt dissolved in 4 cups of warm water
- Keep areola and nipples dry and if using pads or bras, be sure that they are clean and loose fitting.
- Use of coconut oil can feel good and it has hydrating and bacteriostatic properties
- Medihoney, which is a medical grade honey that promotes healing
- Hydrogels are often suggested to help create a comfortable barrier

## How can I avoid getting cracks?

The best way to avoid cracks is by achieving comfortable nursing and pumping sessions. Insuring that the latch is wide, the suck is efficient and effective, and the flanges are a good fit will help to stave off any nipple trauma

## When should I seek help?

Initially, nursing can be uncomfortable, but it should never been painful. The flange should fit comfortably with the nipple freely entering the tunnel and little areola. We are available to help insure that you're lactation experience is pleasant.

## Helpful Resources

- Stanford University, *Hands on Pumping*
- [breastfeedingusa.org](http://breastfeedingusa.org)
- [lalecheleague.org](http://lalecheleague.org)

