

Yeast and Breastfeeding

Yeast infections of the breast are a problem for many breastfeeding moms. Some women get a yeast infection on the nipples only. Other women may get a yeast infection deep inside the breast tissue (ductal yeast). Yeast can be very painful and hard to cure. With help from your midwife and time it will get better!! Hang in there. Keep breastfeeding and try these ideas...

- Yeast infections of the breast need to be treated with medicine! Your midwife will talk with you about what medicine is best for you.
- If mom has yeast baby MAY have yeast in her mouth. If your baby has patches of white on her cheeks or gums she may have thrush and will need treatment. Whether your baby has signs of yeast or not you should call your baby's healthcare provider and talk with him/her or a nurse about your problem with yeast in your breasts and they can help decide if your baby needs medicine.
- Women with yeast infections are more likely to have cracks and blisters on their nipples. The tissue is very fragile because of the yeast. Be careful to ALWAYS latch your baby on correctly. If you have cracks or blisters try these ideas to help them heal: after baby nurses gently squeeze out a few drops of milk and rub it on nipples then let your nipple air dry completely before putting a bra back on; expose nipples to air as much as possible; use Lansinoh nipple cream after every feeding (put it on after the breast milk is dry).
- Stop eating sugar and simple carbohydrates (like white bread, white rice, pasta). Sugars help yeast grow. Less sugars can help slow the growth of yeast.
- Eat yogurt everyday. Yogurt has cultures in it that help your body fight yeast.
- Take a "pro-biotic" such as Yeast Guard. These are pills you can buy at a health food store. It contains things that naturally help your body fight off yeast.
- Grapefruit seed extract (not grape seed extract) 250mg taken three times a day by mouth (by the mother) can be very helpful. Tablets are the best form but this can be found in a liquid extract and taken mixed in water.
- Gentian violet can cure yeast on nipples and thrush. Apply it to the nipple and the inside of baby's mouth once a day for 4 days. Warning: gentian violet makes a big mess and stains everything! Tie dye shirts are best for mom and baby if you use gentian violet ☺. This medicine can be found at Highland pharmacy in Albuquerque.

- **IMPORTANT:** Yeast lives on anything that it comes in contact with! You and your baby can come in contact with it over and over and this can make it very hard to get rid of. Wash your hands with hot water and soap for 20 seconds before and after each feeding. Boil all bottles, nipples, breast pump parts, pacifier and anything else that comes in contact with baby's mouth for 2-3 minutes at the end of every day. Kill the yeast on your shirts and bras and baby's clothes by adding 1 cup of white vinegar (per whole load) to the rinse cycle of your laundry. Wash bras in hot water with a vinegar rinse at the end of every day (if hand washing, a tablespoon of vinegar in a bowl full of water then rinse again with warm water). Instead of washing bras every day you can use disposable breast pads. However, if your breast touches the bra, wash it at the end of the day. These yeast killing techniques take a lot of time and can be frustrating but they are important!! Follow these suggestions for the entire time you have symptoms of yeast and for 7 days after your symptoms are gone.