



Breastfeeding Coalition
of Delaware

Sore Nipples

Nipples may get tender during the first few days or weeks as your body adjusts to nursing. However, severe pain is **NOT** normal. Nipples can get very painful if the baby has a poor latch. Call WIC, a local breastfeeding support group, or lactation consultant for advice on good positioning and latch. Although a web search may provide the advice you need, getting help from a breastfeeding counselor is best.

The following comfort measures will help relieve soreness as you seek help.

- Apply a warm compress on the breast for a few minutes before feeding.
- Hand express some milk to soften breast and stimulate let-down before putting the baby to the breast. This prevents baby from sucking vigorously.
- Breastfeed often (every 1 ½ - 2 hours), as soon as baby shows signs of hunger.
- Offer the least sore breast first. Alternate the nursing position.
- Change nursing pads often.
- Use a lanolin breast cream product. Avoid soaps and hand creams on the nipple, which can be irritating. You can also try breast shells or hydrogel/glycerin dressings for comfort.
- Avoid bottles and pacifiers because they require different sucking actions.
- If latch is uncomfortable, break the suction, remove baby from breast and try again. Make sure baby opens mouth wide to get a deeper latch.
- After feeding, express some breast milk on the nipple and allow to air dry.
- If your nipples are cracked, a thin layer of over-the-counter antibiotic cream after feeds twice a day may help prevent infection. Discuss with your doctor. You do not need to clean it off before feeding.

*Breastfeeding isn't always an easy choice. You made the best choice.
Nipple soreness can be fixed quickly!*