



## Nipple Pain

There are many causes of nipple pain. Nipple tenderness may be normal in the first week after birth. It is common for nipple pain to be related to how the baby is latching. If you cannot get a comfortable latch, contact your public health nurse for help.

### You may see these signs

- redness
- clear or white blisters
- nipple turns white after feeding
- nipple looks pinched after feeding
- cracks
- bleeding
- skin rash

### How to prevent

#### Feed baby when there are early signs of hunger

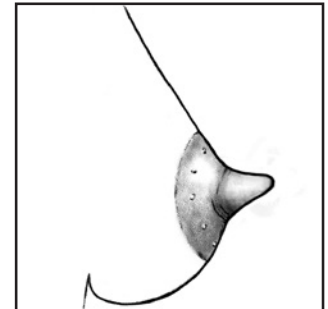
- bringing hands to mouth
- rooting, opening mouth as if looking for nipple
- sucking on lips, tongue, hands, fingers

#### Position and latch baby comfortably

- you can use a pillow to position baby at your breast
- unwrap baby and turn baby towards you
- support baby's neck and shoulders with one hand
- use your other hand to support your breast.  
Place your thumb above the areola and your fingers under the breast.
- use your thumb to tip your nipple upwards
- with your nipple facing your baby's nose, touch your breast to baby's mouth
- when baby opens mouth wide latch baby to your breast
- hold baby close to you during the feeding
- if you have pain during feeding, take baby off the breast and try latching again
- to take baby off the breast, open your baby's mouth by slipping your finger into the corner of baby's mouth to break the suction

#### Also

- if you use breast pads, change them as soon as they are wet
- use mild soap or no soap on your breasts when washing
- your nipple should not look pinched after feeding



Pinched nipple

## What to do

- express a little milk before feeding to soften the breast
- start your feeding on the least painful side
- make sure your latch and position is comfortable
- try feeding in different positions
- apply a small amount of breastmilk or lanolin cream to nipples after each feeding
- if your nipple pain is severe, you can hand express or pump until your nipples feel more comfortable

## There may be other reasons for nipple pain, such as

- infection
- thrush
- skin rashes
- pumping incorrectly
- decreased circulation to nipple (Raynaud's Disease)
- baby's suck
- biting
- pregnancy
- tongue-tie

## How long before nipple pain gets better?

Depending on the reason, nipple pain can get better quickly. If your nipple pain continues even with a better latch, get help from a public health nurse or health care provider.

**Vancouver Coastal Health is committed to helping women successfully breastfeed.  
Please call your local Public Health Unit for additional information.**

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**Other information on parenting are available  
at your local Community Health Office/Centre  
or online at <http://vch.eduhealth.ca>**

You can get further information about breastfeeding from:

Public Health Nurse or Community Dietitian  
at Vancouver Coastal Health..... [www.vch.ca](http://www.vch.ca)  
Baby's Best Chance..... [www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca/parenting](http://www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca/parenting)  
VCH Parenting Website .....<http://parenting.vch.ca/>  
HealthLinkBC .....8-1-1  
Translation services are available in 130 languages..... [www.healthlinkbc.ca](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca)

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