# Mastitis

Mastitis means "Inflammation of the breast"

## Potential Causes of Mastitis:

- Cracked Nipples
- Stress
- Blocked Ducts
- Tight/incorrect fitting bra
- History of mastitis
- Ineffective breastfeeding (e.g. shallow latch)
- Overabundant milk production
- Missed feeding opportunities

*Mothers with Mastitis **do not** need to wean their baby, sudden weaning can cause mastitis to worsen. Discuss with your health provider anti- inflammatory pain medication that is compatible with breastfeeding*

## Symptoms of Mastitis

Red swollen area on your breast that may feel hot and painful to touch

A lump in you breast or an area of hardness on the breast

A burning pain in your breast that may be continuous or may only occur when feeding

Symptoms specific to a bacterial infection may include:

Visible pus in a nipple crack or fissure

Pus or blood in the milk

Red streaks in the breast

Nausea and vomiting with no cause

### Mastitis Treatments:

### Initial treatment at home:

- Analgesia such as anti- inflammatory ibuprofen
- Apply wet or dry heat to the affected area for 10 minutes before feedings at least 3 times a day
- Breastfeeding or expressing milk from the affected side after applying heat to aid milk flow
- Draining the affected breast at least every couple of hours day and night or post feed if baby has been unable to do so.
- Ask someone to check your baby's latch
- Vary your feeding positions
- Wear loose fitting clothing
- Rest and increase fluid intake

### Contact your health provider if:

- After 24 hours of home treatment symptoms are the same or worse
- You have had a fever for some time
- Obvious signs of bacterial infection i.e. pus
- Temperature suddenly spikes higher

Your healthcare provider may then prescribe you an antibiotic compatible with breastfeeding.

*If in doubt always contact your healthcare provider!*

*References: www.nhs.uk/conditions/mastitis*

*www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/publications-leaflets*

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