



Complementary Therapies & Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is the best & most natural way of feeding your baby, but it can take some time to get lactation established. Eat plenty of protein foods, vitamins & minerals, fruit & vegetables, to keep you healthy, & drink *at least* two to three litres of fluid daily. Garlic & oats, nettle or fennel seed teas help stimulate milk supply. Breastfeeding can be tiring - try Bach flower remedies, olive 2 drops in water 2-3 times a day & Rescue Remedy, 4 drops neat on your tongue to keep you calm.

The best way to prevent sore nipples is to ensure your baby is properly attached, but if you are sore, steep two chamomile tea bags in boiling water, drain, cool & squeeze, then place them in your bra over your nipples. Chamomile contains chemicals which ease inflammation - some nipple creams also contain chamomile, but wipe off excess cream before putting your baby to your breast. Geranium (*pelargonium*) leaves placed inside your bra with the underside of the leaves nearest to your skin, will also help to relieve soreness and reduce inflammation.



If your breasts become engorged, use dark green cabbage leaves, *wiped* clean & cooled in the fridge. *Don't* wash them as this interferes with osmosis which draws out excess fluid. Place them inside your bra to reduce swelling, replace when wet & keep repeating until you feel more comfortable. Gentle breast massage towards your nipples also encourages milk flow, & a simple reflexology technique to increase milk supply is to massage the areas between the knuckles of both hands as this is a hand reflexology point for the breasts.

Homeopathic remedies can help but must be prescribed for your exact symptoms. If you've had no response within five days stop the remedy & consult a qualified homeopath. Phytolacca is suitable if you have excess milk, lumpy tender breasts & feel irritable; pulsatilla is appropriate for insufficient milk, cracked, burning nipples, tense, swollen breasts & if you keep crying & need sympathy. Chamomilla is better if engorgement makes you feel so irritable you can't bear it & you get headaches after feeding.

Always inform your midwife if you are taking any natural remedies when breastfeeding

Leaflet prepared by Expectancy's Director, Denise Tiran, and intended as a general guide only
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