

Fact Sheet

FACT SHEET 7.
(CHS_FS_GNA_007)

BREASTFEEDING (TENDER OR CRACKED NIPPLES)

Tender Nipples

Some nipple tenderness is normal at the start of feeds in the first 1-2 weeks.

Tips

- Wash hands well before feeding.
- Change breast pads when they are wet.
- Avoid using drying agents (eg. soap) on nipples.
- Carefully detach baby from your breast by breaking the suction with your little finger in the corner of baby's mouth.
- Expose your nipples to air after each feeding.
- Allow breast milk to dry on nipples after each feed as it has anti-infective properties.

Cracked Nipples

Tips

- Seek assistance from a breastfeeding trained professional.
- Poor attachment is the most common cause of cracked nipples.
- Follow suggestions for tender nipples.
- If it is too painful to breastfeed, don't feed on the sore breast (for 12-24 hours) and express.
- Express milk by hand and feed the milk to your baby.
- Gently remove breast pads to stop further damage to your nipples. If the pad sticks to the breast, express a little to moisten it before trying to remove it again.
- Put expressed breast milk on nipples following feeds to promote healing.

Research suggests the application of nipple creams is ineffective in most cases.

Source: Breastfeeding booklet compiled by the Community Child Health Service of the Royal Children's Hospital and Health Service District.
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