

Blocked Milk Duct

A blocked milk duct leads to a painful lump in the breast. They may happen for a variety of reasons including:

- Skipped or delayed feedings
- One-sided breastfeeding
- Pressure from tight clothing or bra
- Pressure from forming an “air-hole” for the baby to breathe while feeding
- Sleeping in a position that puts pressure on one area of the breast
- Weaning

If left untreated, a blocked duct can lead to mastitis. In general, you can do the following to make you feel better, regardless of the cause:

- Apply moist heat to the involved breast 3 to 5 minutes before a feeding.
- Breastfeed on the affected breast first to allow for more complete emptying of the ducts.
- Be sure your baby is latched properly.
- Gently massage the affected area while nursing.
- Change the position of the baby at each feeding (cradle, football, side-lying, cross-cradle) to allow for more complete emptying of the ducts.



- Nurse often (at least every 2 hours) for 15 to 20 minutes per side.
- Be sure to get plenty of rest.
- Check the fit of your nursing bra.
- When ready to wean your baby—do it gradually.

If the problem worsens, redness or fever develop or the pain does not get better within 24 hours, contact your health care provider.

