



Breastfeeding Committee For
Saskatchewan

IMPORTANT

- Apply warm, moist cloth to breasts before breast feeding.
- Feed at least every 2 hours.
- Hand express or pump for comfort and to drain your breasts.

For further information contact:

Local Public Health Nurse

Lactation Consultant

*Local Health Care
Provider*

*Local breastfeeding support
group*

Breastfeeding Engorgement

What is *Fullness* of the breast?

- **Fullness is a normal and temporary condition** when breasts are larger and heavier with slight tenderness.
- begins 2nd to 6th day after delivery, peaking about the 3rd day caused by increased body fluid and increased amount of breast milk.
- decreases 2-3 weeks after delivery.

What is *Engorgement*?

- **Engorgement is not a normal condition**
- breasts are swollen, warm, red, and painful
- surrounding skin may be tight and shiny; nipples may be flattened
- may start 3rd to 5th day after delivery
- usually lasts 12 – 48 hours **if** baby is breastfeeding well.

What can you do to decrease engorgement?

- Breastfeed often, at least every 2 hours.
- Put warm moist cloths on breasts or take a warm shower or tub bath right before feeding. Too much heat may increase the swelling.
- Gently massage and hand express or pump breasts enough to soften the nipple and areola before each feeding.
- Make sure the breast the baby feeds from is drained well, before switching to the second breast.
- If breasts are still tender after nursing, hand express or pump until comfortable.
- Some mothers find relief by applying a cold compress to breasts between feedings (Place a bag of frozen vegetables, frozen popcorn kernels or crushed ice on the breast for 20 minutes).
- Applying green cabbage leaves (refrigerated or at room temperature) directly to the breast may help– remove when wilted; can reapply. Stop use once engorgement decreases.
- Avoid soothers.
- Avoid supplementing your baby with milk from a bottle.
- Drink enough liquids so you are not thirsty. **Do not restrict fluids.**
- Wear a well fitted bra that does not have any pressure areas.

HealthLine
1-877-800-0002

*Adapted with permission from
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