



Breastfeeding Committee For
Saskatchewan

IMPORTANT

Signs of Thrush:

- You have burning pain in the breast during and *after* feeds.
- White patches are seen in baby's mouth that do not wipe off.
- See your doctor for treatment of **both** you and baby.
- Treatment usually takes 2 weeks.

Breastfeeding Thrush

What is thrush?

- Thrush is a yeast infection caused by one member of the candida family of fungi, called *Candida albicans*. Almost all humans are colonized with it yet it rarely causes a problem until our defenses are down, and it grows.*

Possible signs and symptoms in mom are:

- sudden onset of sore nipples
- cracked or sore nipples that don't heal
- flaky, itchy, red or burning nipples; the areola can be affected also
- deep shooting or burning pain in breast during and *after* feeds
- vaginal yeast infection.

Possible signs and symptoms in baby

- diaper rash that does not improve after using diaper cream for 2 to 3 days
- fussy at the breast or refuses breast; excess gas
- white patches on inside of mouth, cheeks or tongue that do not wipe off with a cloth.
- the baby may have **no** symptoms.

Treatment

- It is important that your doctor treat **both** you and your baby at the same time.
- It is important to finish all of the medication. Common treatment can include Gentian Violet, Kenacomb or other ointments, Fluconazole, and others.
- Treatment usually takes 2 weeks. Thrush may come back if treatment is stopped too soon.

What you can do:

- Continue breastfeeding.
- Wash your hands often, especially after changing baby's diaper & after using bathroom.
- Rinse nipples with clean water and air dry after each feeding.
- Boil baby's soothers or bottle nipples once daily for 5 to 10 minutes.
- After 1 week of treatment throw soothers and bottle nipples out and use new ones.
- Wash any toys that have been in the baby's mouth in hot, soapy water and rinse well.
- If using a breast pump, boil all parts, as recommended by manufacturer, daily.
- Throw out disposable nursing pads when they become wet. If using cloth nursing pads, change them after every feeding and wash in hot, soapy water.
- You do not need to throw away any breastmilk that was collected during your problem with *Candida albicans*; although freezing does not kill this, it is likely, given the antifungal factors in breastmilk, that the fungus will remain in the form that does not cause problems. *Candida albicans* is with us all the time. It is impossible to get rid of it, and not necessary to try. The main thing is to re-establish a "normal" relationship with it.*
- If thrush continues to come back, **all** members of the family may need to be treated.

For further information contact:

Local Public Health Nurse

Lactation Consultant

*Local Health Care
Provider*

*Local breastfeeding support
group*

HealthLine
1-877-800-0002

*Newman, J., Pitman, T. Dr. Jack Newman's
Guide to Breastfeeding. 2003. p115-120.

*Adapted with permission from
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