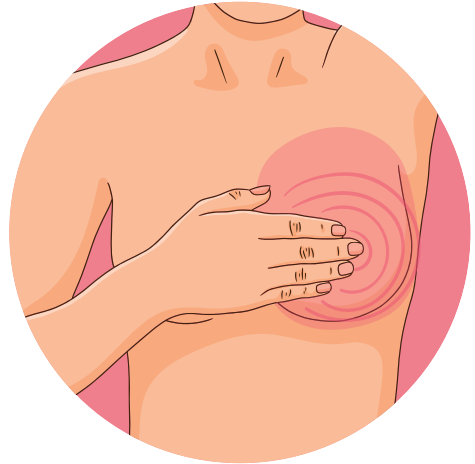




DIAGNOSING & TREATING CLOGGED DUCTS



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A clogged duct, also known as a blocked or plugged duct, is a common issue that can occur during breastfeeding. It happens when milk becomes obstructed and does not flow smoothly in a specific area of the breast. Here are the steps to resolve a plugged or clogged duct:

- 01. Begin treatment promptly:** It's important to address a clogged duct as soon as possible to prevent it from developing into mastitis, a breast infection.
- 02. Take a warm shower:** Warm, moist heat can help loosen the clog and promote milk flow. Take a warm shower and let the water run over the affected breast. If a shower is not possible, use a warm compress on the area. A trick recommended by lactation consultants is using hot water in a diaper as a warm compress.
- 03. Massage the breast:** While in the shower or with a warm compress nearby, massage the tender breast. Start by clearing the area in front of the clog and then gently massage in a forward motion toward the nipple. Avoid applying direct pressure on the clog initially, as it may be painful. Alternate this type of massage with very gentle upward movement toward the armpit. Some mothers find using the butt of an electric toothbrush helpful for stubborn clogs.

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- 04. Nurse or pump:** Nurse your baby immediately after showering or using a warm compress. Breastfeeding is the most effective way to empty the breast, but if it's uncomfortable or you are away from your baby, pumping can be an alternative. Continue massaging the breast while nursing or pumping to help clear the clog.
- 05. Treat pain and swelling:** After nursing or pumping, apply ice packs to the affected breast to reduce pain and swelling. Taking ibuprofen can also help with pain relief and reduce inflammation. Some mothers find alternating between heat and ice packs for about 24 hours, or until the clog is cleared, beneficial. Listen to your body and do what feels best for you.
- 06. Don't neglect the other breast:** It's essential to continue using both breasts for feeding to prevent the development of a clog on the other side.

If you experience symptoms such as a fever, red streaks on your breast, or feeling sick, it may indicate that the clogged duct has turned into mastitis. In such cases, it is important to contact your obstetrician or midwife for medical evaluation and treatment.

Remember to reach out to a healthcare professional or lactation consultant if you have any concerns or if the clogged duct persists despite home treatments. They can provide additional guidance and support to help resolve the issue.