



*Solutions when feeding feels hard*

# Breastfeeding Troubleshooting Guide

*Common challenges and evidence-based solutions for your nursing journey*

Breastfeeding is natural but not always easy. Most challenges are temporary and solvable with the right support. This guide covers common issues, but always reach out to a lactation consultant for personalized help.

## Common Challenges & Solutions

### Painful Latch

*Signs: Toe-curling pain, cracked/bleeding nipples, pinched nipple shape after feeding*

**Try:**

- Break suction and re-latch (insert finger to break seal)
- Aim nipple toward baby's nose, wait for wide mouth
- Ensure baby takes full areola, not just nipple
- Check for tongue/lip ties with IBCLC

### Low Milk Supply (Perceived or Actual)

*Signs: Baby unsatisfied after feeds, not enough wet/dirty diapers, poor weight gain*

**Try:**

- Feed on demand (8-12x per day for newborns)
- Offer both breasts each feeding
- Skin-to-skin contact to boost hormones
- Power pumping (20 min on, 10 off, repeat)

### Engorgement

*Signs: Breasts feel hard, hot, swollen; baby can't latch onto tight breast*

**Try:**

- Reverse pressure softening before latching
- Warm compress before, cold after feeding
- Hand express just enough to soften
- Cabbage leaves in bra (seriously, it works!)

### Clogged Ducts

*Signs: Tender lump in breast, red spot, pain during letdown*

**Try:**

- Nurse frequently, starting on affected side
- Massage toward nipple while feeding
- Warm compress + vibration on lump
- Dangle feeding (baby below breast)

### Mastitis

*Signs: Flu-like symptoms, fever, red streaks on breast, intense pain*

**Try:**

- Continue nursing (it's safe and helps!)
- Rest, hydrate, fever reducers
- Call provider if fever persists 24+ hours
- Antibiotics may be needed - don't delay

### Thrush (Yeast Infection)

*Signs: Burning/itching nipples, shiny pink skin, white patches in baby's mouth*

**Try:**

- Both mom and baby need treatment
- Air dry nipples, change breast pads often
- Wash bras in hot water daily
- Probiotics for you, sterilize pacifiers

## Perfect Latch Checklist

1

### Position

Baby's ear, shoulder, hip aligned. Tummy to tummy.

2

### Aim

Nipple to nose. Wait for wide, gaping mouth.

3

### Latch

Bring baby to breast (not breast to baby). Chin touches first.

4

### Check

Lips flanged out, no clicking, rhythmic suck-swallow.



### When to Seek Help Immediately

- ! Baby not gaining weight or losing after day 4
- ! Fever over 101°F with breast symptoms

- ! Fewer than 6 wet diapers after day 5
- ! Severe pain that doesn't improve

- ! Baby too sleepy to feed, hard to wake
- ! Signs of dehydration in baby (dry mouth, no tears)

## Feeding Positions to Try

### Cradle Hold

Classic position - baby's head in crook of arm

### Cross-Cradle

More control - opposite hand supports head

### Football/Clutch

## Support Resources

### Find an IBCLC

International Board Certified Lactation Consultant  
[ilca.org/find-a-lactation-consultant](http://ilca.org/find-a-lactation-consultant)

### La Leche League

Free peer support and local groups  
[lllusa.org](http://lllusa.org)

Great for C-section recovery, large breasts

#### Side-Lying

Perfect for night feeds and recovery

#### Laid-Back

Reclined position, baby on chest - instinctive

#### Breastfeeding Hotline

24/7 support line

1-800-994-9662

#### Your Doula

Audrey's Nest lactation support

[audreysnest.com/contact](http://audreysnest.com/contact)



audrey's nest

[hello@audreysnest.com](mailto:hello@audreysnest.com)

For personalized lactation support

[audreysnest.com/contact](http://audreysnest.com/contact)