

Mastitis

What is Mastitis?

Mastitis is when you have inflammation in your breast. It could be because of an infection, but not always, but if it isn't treated it can lead to breast abscess. Symptoms of mastitis include a warm, red, or sensitive area (or any combination of the three). You may also have a fever and flu-like symptoms. It can last anywhere from a couple hours to a week.

It can be difficult to tell whether you have an infection or not, but if you do have an infection it should clear within 1 day of taking an antibiotic. Non-infectious mastitis will typically clear between 2 and 4 days on its own. Needless to say, many cases of mastitis end in antibiotic, even if there was no infection.

One-third of breastfeeding mothers will experience mastitis, typically in the first few months when you have an abundant volume of milk.

Mastitis can be caused by nipple damage – which allows bacteria in, milk that isn't removed regularly and/or well, or a run-down body in general. What this means is that poor latch can create a problem and lead to damaged nipples; not draining your breasts often enough or efficiently can also lead to mastitis as well as having constant pressure on your milk ducts, such as a tight sports bra, an underwire bra, or a heavy backpack. Quite simply, by neglecting to take care of yourself can result in mastitis, as well as a number of other health problems.

Treating Mastitis

- Drain your breasts often, keeping the one with mastitis soft
- Breast massages may help relieve pain as well as help to better drain your breasts
 - Use cool compresses to relieve swelling and pain
 - Use heat to help drain breasts more completely
- Ask your care provider about an anti-inflammatory

