

Guidelines for Breastfeeding and Surgery

According to AAP, "Should hospitalization of the breastfeeding mother or infant be necessary, every effort should be made to maintain breastfeeding, preferably directly, or by pumping the breasts and feeding expressed breast milk, if necessary."

After Baby's Surgery

When your baby goes back for surgery nerves may be at all-time high. But you may take some comfort in knowing that you can breastfeed your baby 2-4 hours prior to the surgery and again after they are out of surgery. There should be no need for any other fluids or foods. Breast milk and the act of nursing both act as pain relievers for the baby. You may even be able to sleep with your child if the hospital supports it. Some hospitals have double beds so that mom or dad can sleep with them. You will want to be very clear with the staff from the beginning that you are still breastfeeding and wish to nurse before and after surgery as well as the entire hospital stay. Some hospitals will be easier to find support than others. Just remember to stay strong to your efforts and feelings.

After Mother's Surgery

If the mother is the one who is going to be having surgery it may be a little difficult, depending on the type of surgery you're having. If you are having a simple outpatient surgery then you should not have any problems. The more extensive the surgery, the problems that may arise.

Typically after any surgery you should be allowed to nurse your child as long as you are fully awake and have talked to your anesthesiologist about medications that were used and if they are breastfeeding friendly. Make sure you make it clear to everyone beforehand that you wish to breastfeed after surgery and for your entire stay in the hospital.



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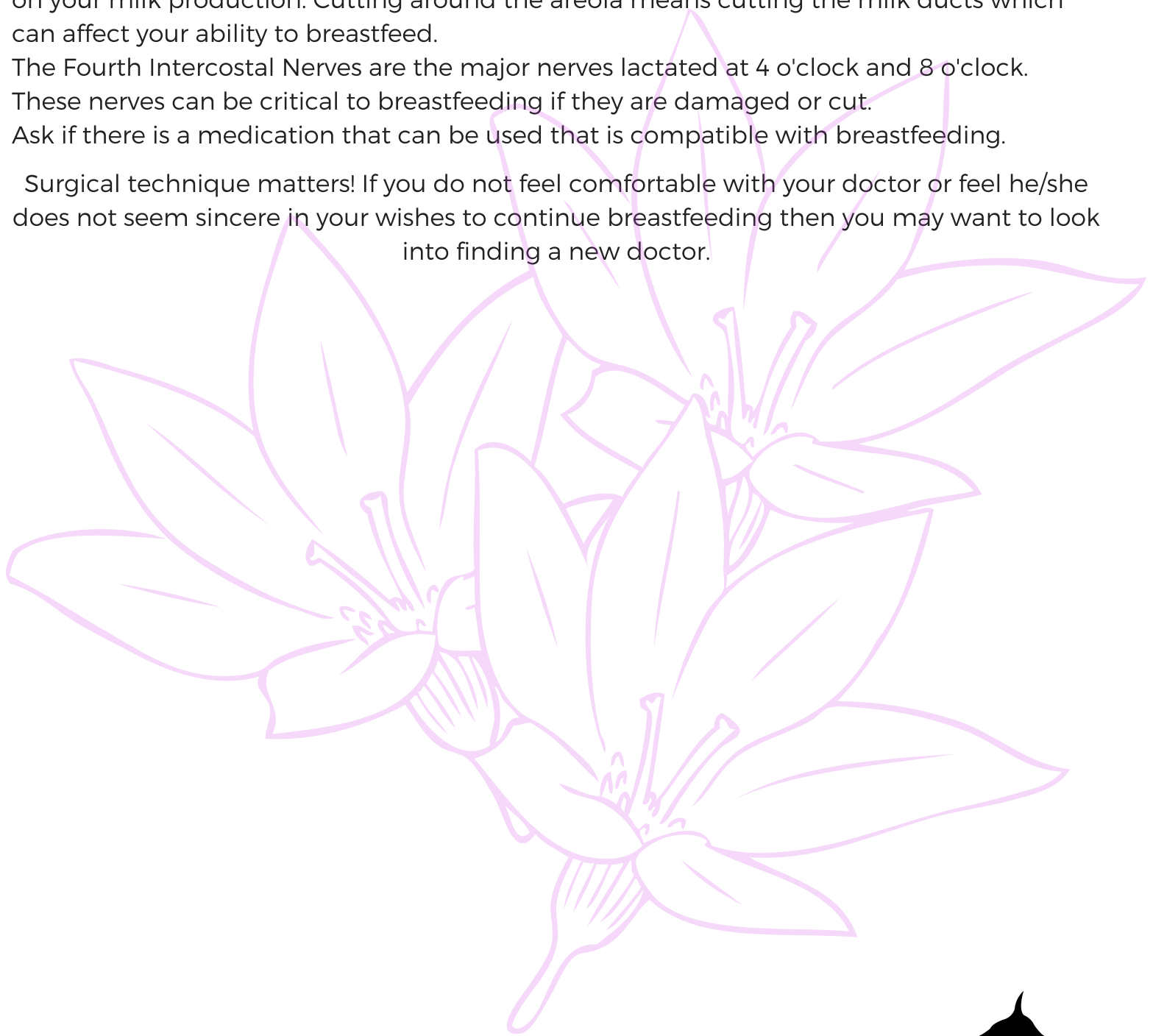
In the case of having a breast surgery there are a few things you want to check on before the day comes, such as:

Talk to your doctor about what incisions he will be using because it can have an impact on your milk production. Cutting around the areola means cutting the milk ducts which can affect your ability to breastfeed.

The Fourth Intercostal Nerves are the major nerves lactated at 4 o'clock and 8 o'clock. These nerves can be critical to breastfeeding if they are damaged or cut.

Ask if there is a medication that can be used that is compatible with breastfeeding.

Surgical technique matters! If you do not feel comfortable with your doctor or feel he/she does not seem sincere in your wishes to continue breastfeeding then you may want to look into finding a new doctor.



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