

Mastitis Self Care

- Rest is essential. Try to rest while baby is feeding, sleep when baby sleeps, ask for help, eat well and stay hydrated.
- Gentle lymphatic drainage massage before feeding. Stroke the whole breast to move fluid back towards the armpit.
- It is important to continue breastfeeding, responding to your baby's needs. If it is too painful, gently hand express or pump to get the milk flowing. Don't focus on 'emptying' the breast as this might cause more problems.
- Use a cold cloth or ice pack wrapped in a cloth on the affected area of the breast for 10 mins after feeding, or more frequently if required. Avoid ice burn. Some people find gentle warmth soothing, avoid excessive heat which may increase inflammation.
- Consider taking pain relief and anti inflammatory medication. If taking antibiotics, ensure you complete the full course. Contact your GP if you have a fever or have flu-like symptoms for more than 24 hours. Contact your GP or ER if you have a temperature $>38^{\circ}\text{C}$.



Additional considerations:

Sunflower or soy lecithin 5-10g daily

Therapeutic ultrasound may reduce inflammation and is available in some hospitals/local health areas

Probiotic containing *Ligilactobacillus salivarius* or *Limosilactobacillus fermentum*

Attend a breastfeeding support group to make sure breastfeeding is going well

Contact your local maternity unit or community breastfeeding team if you have further concerns

For more information and to find your local breastfeeding group, visit mychild.ie.