



## Breastfeeding Committee for Saskatchewan

[www.thebcs.ca](http://www.thebcs.ca)

### **Important:**

Apply cold compresses to breasts to relieve discomfort.

- Feed at least every 2 hours.
- Try Reverse Pressure Softening.
- Talk to your health care provider about using an anti-inflammatory.

### **For further information contact:**

Local Public Health Nurse

International Board Certified  
Lactation Consultant (IBCLC)

Local breastfeeding support  
Group

Saskatchewan HealthLine 811

### **References:**

The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding, La  
Leche League International 2010

Breastfeeding Answers Made Simple,  
Nancy Mohrbacher, IBCLC, FILCA 2010

[www.kellymom.com](http://www.kellymom.com)

# Breastfeeding - Engorgement

## **What is Engorgement?**

- Too much fluid in the breast!
- Increased blood circulation and lymph flowing to the breast which occurs 3 – 5 days after birth.
- Caused by IV fluids during labour, which will also go to your breasts.

## **Possible signs and symptoms?**

- Breasts feel heavy, swollen, warm or hot and painful.
- The surrounding skin may be taunt and shiny; nipples may be flattened.
- Starts around the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> day after delivery or later.

## **What can you do?**

- Breastfeed often, at least every 2 hours, beginning right after birth.
- If your breast is too firm for baby to latch, use Reverse Pressure Softening to push fluids away from areola.
- Moving your breasts gently may drain the lymph fluid. Massage gently and lift them.
- Lie flat on your back when you rest.
- Ask your health care provider about taking an anti-inflammatory.
- Applying a cold compress to breasts between feedings (place a bag of frozen vegetables, frozen popcorn kernels or crushed ice on the breast for 20 minutes on then 20 minutes off).
- Applying green cabbage leaves (refrigerated or at room temperature) directly to the breast (not over the nipple) may help decrease swelling. Remove the hard central stem. Wear them inside your bra. Change the leaves for new ones once they get soggy.

NOTE: Only apply cabbage to breasts if milk is flowing well and baby is drinking well, as this has the potential to dry up your milk if overused and if milk is not moving well.



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