

Aeroflow Breastpumps

Candida Care

Breastfeeding can be a rewarding experience, but it can also come with challenges, such as sore nipples. While thrush—a yeast infection caused by the fungus *Candida albicans*—was once thought to be a frequent cause of nipple pain, recent research suggests it may not be as common as previously believed. It's important to explore all potential causes of nipple and breast discomfort before settling on a diagnosis. This care guide will help you understand the various reasons for sore nipples and breast pain, including thrush. With this information, you can get the right help and enjoy a pain-free breastfeeding experience.

Understanding Yeast Infections

- **Symptoms of Yeast Infections:** Common symptoms include redness, itching, burning of the nipples, and shooting pain in the breast.
- **Diagnosis:** Diagnosis is typically made by observing symptoms and ruling out other causes. Milk cultures have been found to be an unreliable method for testing the presence of *Candida* in breast milk.
- **Increased Risk:** Mothers who have recently taken antibiotics, either during pregnancy or postpartum, are at increased risk of vaginal and other yeast overgrowth.
- **Normal Presence of Yeast:** Yeast, particularly *Candida*, is naturally found in everyone's gastrointestinal tract and can be present in the mouths of a significant percentage of people, especially babies. It usually becomes problematic only when there is an imbalance, such as after antibiotic use or in individuals with weakened immune systems.

Common Causes of Nipple Pain

- **Poor Latch:** A poor latch is one of the primary reasons for nipple pain during breastfeeding, leading to injuries such as cracking, bruising, and discomfort.
- **Bacterial Infections:** *Staphylococcus aureus* (staph) is a bacteria that can cause nipple pain, especially if the skin is broken or injured.
- **Vasospasm or Raynaud's Phenomenon:** This condition involves constriction of blood vessels in the nipple (usually caused by compression from a shallow latch or ill-fitting breast pump flange) leading to pain and often color changes in the nipple.

- **Skin Conditions:** Other skin conditions, such as eczema, psoriasis, and dermatitis can cause symptoms similar to *Candida*.
- **Other Factors:** Additional causes of nipple pain can include pump trauma, tongue-tie, and a new pregnancy, among others.

Treatment Considerations

- **Thrush in Baby's Mouth:** Thrush is very common in newborns and is unlikely to spread to mom's nipples and cause a yeast infection, although it can sometimes do so.
- **Limited Research:** There is no gold-standard treatment for mothers suffering from yeast overgrowth on their nipples. Common treatments include Nystatin, Fluconazole, and natural remedies such as grapefruit seed extract and gentian violet.
- **Expert Opinions:** Some healthcare providers recommend treating both mother and baby for yeast, even if only one is showing symptoms.
- **Address Underlying Cause:** In many cases, nipple pain is linked to a poor latch, bacterial infection, or vasospasms rather than yeast. If your current treatment plan isn't improving your breastfeeding comfort, continue searching for the root cause.
- **Get Breastfeeding Help:** Working with a [Lactation Consultant](#) can provide invaluable support in helping you overcome your breastfeeding challenges, including sore nipples.

While nipple yeast infections can occur, they shouldn't be the first assumption when experiencing pain. Understanding the broader range of possible causes can lead to more effective treatment and a better breastfeeding experience. If you have concerns about nipple pain or other breastfeeding issues, reach out to your healthcare provider or lactation consultant as soon as possible.

What If I Have Questions?

If you are interested in learning more, these Aeroflow classes expand on some of the topics discussed above:

- Ultimate Breastfeeding Prep
- Breastfeeding SOS
- Lactation Q & A

To register for these classes, log into your portal or click [here](#).

Want More Info?

For a directory of Aeroflow's other Care Guides offering information on pregnancy, baby care, and more, browse our comprehensive list of titles:

<https://www.hersourcehealth.com/aeroflow-care-guides/>

References:

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