

# Cracked nipple

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This is observed in about 10% of nursing mothers and is thought to arise from the strong negative force created by suckling. It initiates as a small blister on the nipple that soon ruptures to give rise to a small ulcer. The crack thus formed is often colonised by bacteria or fungi. The microbes from the crack may enter the milk ducts and may progress to lactational mastitis. If the nipple becomes cracked during lactation, it should be rested for 48 hours and the breast should be emptied with a breast pump. The sore nipple should be gently washed with warm water and moisturising soap followed by application of an antimicrobial cream (m upirocin).

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