

Engorgement

Full breasts when your milk comes in after birth are normal. The feeling of fullness should be relieved after breastfeeding your baby. Engorgement is when the fullness causes discomfort or pain. Engorgement usually lasts less than 24 hours.

Symptoms

- Uncomfortably full breasts
- Painful breasts
- Difficult for baby to latch
- Common 2-6 days after birth

Causes

- Supplementing baby with formula
- Not breastfeeding shortly after birth
- Baby not latched on well
- Sleepy baby
- Infrequent feedings
- Time-limited feedings

Comfort Measures

- Breastfeed more
- Apply a cold compress (e.g., bag of frozen peas) to breasts
- Fill a sink/container with cold water and place breasts in water
- Cabbage compress—use fresh, uncooked cabbage and apply to breasts
- Hand expression—ask a lactation consultant for help
- Pumping—use a pump to relieve the pressure

This milk may be stored for later use

- Ask your doctor about ibuprofen

Source: Mohrbacher, Nancy, IBCLC, *The Breastfeeding Answer Book*.
La Leche League International, 2005.



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IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & WELFARE
DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH

This publication was produced with 100% federal funds from USDA.
Detailed costs are available from the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare,
WIC Program, 208.334.5948 or toll free 866-347-5484. Form 442E - 07/15

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