

Submission no. 408

AUTHORISED: 20/6/07 *ra*

Subject: Breastfeeding woes

I had a lot of trouble with breastfeeding at the start but was determined to keep going. My baby is now 8 weeks old and we seem to be OK now (fingers crossed) but herre are the problems I had and how I think mothers can be assisted.

My baby took some time to learn how to feed, my nipples got very sore in the process. Just as we were starting to get the hang of it my shoulder was injured and it was really painful to feed from that side. I rang a number of physios to get it sorted asap and no one had availability that day. Once this was sorted I then developed a lump, went to a physio for an ultrasound and that evening ended up with severe shakes, which was later diagnosed as mastitis. I called the maternal help line, who were brilliant. I was supposed to get antibiotics but going to my local emergency cost \$180 before you get any prescription (as it was after hours). I therefore waited till the morning which probably didn't help.

I was given a lot of contradictory advice along the way, in particular as to how to feed, for example whether to use both sides on each feed, how long to feed for, for example drain one side and then just have a little go on the other side, or allow equal time on each side, whether to force feed/tickle the baby to make sure she got X minutes etc. I think if all midwives, nurses, lactation concultants etc were given the same information this would help. The inconsistency meant I always felt I was doing something wrong or I would be given different information when speaking to someone different. I still don't know whether there is so such thing as foremilk and hindmilk, some say yes others say no. So for me consistency in advice would be very useful. The 24 hr no. you can call is brilliant, although I was on hold for quite a while and nearly hung up. It may be useful to have an extra person answering those phones if possible or have some advice/menus to listen to while you wait, so long as this does not mean oyu have to wait longer.

Having a way you can get antibiotics (say for overnight only pending a Drs prescription the next day) may be useful.

I was determined to proceed with breastfeeding so persisted but can see why others may not.

I hope this is the sort of info you were after.

Regards,