

Nipple Blebs

A nipple bleb or milk blister looks like white spot on the nipple. It may be caused by a plugged milk duct or skin blocking the milk duct. It may occur after nipple trauma. A bleb may or may not be painful. If it does not hurt, no treatment is needed.



Photo credit: Jack Newman, MD, used with permission

If it hurts, try the following:

- Before breastfeeding, apply wet heat by either soaking the nipple in the bath or the sink or by applying wet warm compresses before feeding. The idea is to thin the skin so that the baby can more easily draw out the plug of thickened milk during breastfeeding.
- If the bleb is not relieved with wet heat and breastfeeding:
 - Wear a cotton ball soaked with olive oil in the bra between feedings to soften the skin.
 - Once the skin is softened, try to peel away thickened skin over the bleb.
 - Then try to manually express the plug.

If these do not provide relief, ask your health-care provider to open the bleb. Immediate milk flow should bring relief. If the bleb is dry and the milk doesn't flow, continue trying the above.

If blebs recur, try eliminating saturated fats from your diet and taking lecithin supplements (one tablespoon three times per day or one to two 1200 mg capsules three or four times per day).