

Health Reflections



Breastfeeding

Before we dive into this most individual *and* universal of subjects, let me paraphrase a piece of advice that homeopaths have held dear since 1810.

§6 Observe each individual without casting judgement.

This means that if you don't really enjoy breastfeeding your baby, we're trained to note it without prejudice. If your breasts feel engorged and unattractive, if you're feeling vulnerable or resentful or low, we're trained to listen and to help. And if you choose not to breastfeed or if you need to dry up for any other reason, we'll hold the space as you explore your position, choice or dilemma.

On the other hand, your experience of breastfeeding may be positive, with a fabulous bond and sense of joy. But if the feeding pattern feels challenged at any point e.g. by colic or anger, mastitis or grief or difficult weaning – it's probably within the scope of homeopathy to support you.



Let's suppose that the milk supply is insufficient. In a homeopath's repertory, there are several dozen medicines listed as having an affinity for scanty breastmilk. To whittle down to a single good match, we must first gain a fuller understanding of *who it is exactly* that has a low supply – is she warm, chilly, weepy, upbeat? Is the problem one-sided or worse at a particular time of day or

night? What else is going on right now?

Having gathered a broader totality of symptoms, and having observed the nature of the baby too, we can select a remedy that is homeopathic (i.e. similar) to the pair. This will be the process whatever your complaint – from nipple abscess or mastitis to salty breastmilk or an infant's intolerance of breastmilk.

On a practical note, breastfeeding is a thirsty and physically taxing job. It's important that the mother stays hydrated (with water, stock and perhaps some suitable herbal teas) as well as being sufficiently nourished. For the healthy production of milk and for the general maintenance of hormonal affairs, it's a good idea to source a supply of eggs, fish, butter, tallow, olive oil and / or other traditional fats – of the best quality that's available / affordable at the time. Where possible, it's also wise to *avoid* factory-made fats (e.g. vegetable oils and margarines.) If you're keen to help a new mum, why not whip up a batch of fresh chicken stock or soup, or some baked egg custard, sweetened with a little honey?

With this kind of individualised support and personal empowerment, it is possible to overcome a whole host of breastfeeding challenges. And by uprooting symptoms homeopathically, mothers and babies can often avoid the need for formula milk and antibiotics - although there is clearly a time and place for all interventions. Above all, it is appreciated that every single story and style of feeding deserves to be recognised as *unique*, and as it is. Thankfully, this is at the heart of homeopathy.

"A voice within me whispers, 'Keep going, don't you stop.' I'm pumping for my baby and there's love in every drop."

From Gráinne Evans'
Poem About Pumping

THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK ♥ READ BEFORE YOU THINK*

Birth and Breastfeeding: Michael Odent (Clairview, 2012);

Organon of the Medical Art §6: Samuel Hahnemann / W. B. O'Reilly (Editor) & S. Decker (Translator) (Birdcage Press, 2013);

3 Homeopathic Remedies for Mastitis: Joette Calabrese (www.joettecalabrese.com, 2014);

The Breast of Times: Gráinne Evans (www.thebreastoftimes.wordpress.com, 2021);

The Homeopathic Physician's Guide to Lactation: Patricia Hatherly (Luminoz, 2004).

*Fran Lebowitz - Social Studies

Mastitis

Mastitis is not pleasant, and understandably many new mums fear the condition. But with a simple home remedy kit and with basic home-prescriber know-how, the fear can take a back seat and mothers may relax.

This is because homeopathy is tried and tested in such an acute situation – when symptoms match, of course.

On her website, Joette Calabrese explains that *“when a woman had mastitis in 1798, she likely chose one of the remedies below, just like today's modern mum. Yes, the very same remedies that worked then, work today. Not unlike traditional foods, real medicine transcends centuries. No chemical tinkering, no shenanigans... Just simple, safe and efficacious.”* So, here are three of those time-tested remedies that may help.

Phytolacca 30c or 200c is what is reached for when the breasts are lumpy with intense pain. That pain may radiate into the armpit or radiate throughout the whole body. When the child latches on to the nipple, the breast immediately hurts. Warm damp applications (such as a shower or warm poultice) usually relieve the pain, but Phytolacca can promote its complete dissipation, if the whole symptoms picture matches.

Belladonna 30c or 200c is as always a go-to when the onset of illness is sudden with a rapidly developing fever. It really is an important remedy in the family home prescriber kit. In mastitis, the breast will be hot to touch, engorged, red and throbbing. Typically the patient will feel worse for any jarring movement.

Hepar sulph 30c or 200c is homeopathic when a mother cannot stand the least touch, and is too sensitive to allow her baby to feed. She feels chilly and worse from the smallest of drafts, and may be prone to abscesses.

Choose the best matching description and take a single pillule. In intense cases, repeat half hourly and observe the response. As symptoms subside, slow down the repetition and when better, stop. If no relief is obtained after 3 doses of a remedy, change the potency or choose a better match, and seek specialist advice.

If none of the above match your exact symptoms, your homeopath will have a working knowledge and access to plenty more remedies such as the Malvas and Matridonals. Keep in touch and stay empowered.

Each Health Reflections article and blog has been written for those who wish to learn about the true meaning of health, who desire to think broadly and who are ready to take responsibility for their own personal choices. All information shared is of educational nature and should not replace medical advice. No guarantees are made regarding accuracy or completeness of content, or its applicability to any condition or personal circumstance. If you choose to implement any of the ideas or principles described, you are taking full responsibility for your actions. In times of illness, seek professional healthcare.

AUDE SAPERE – MENTRA WYBOD – DARE TO GET IT

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Gifts for New Mums

Beyond milk, warm clothing, a blanket, nappies and a safe place to sleep, newborns need few material 'things.' Similarly, new mums may appreciate your time, support and calm presence at the other end of the phone more than a shower of presents.

Still, gifts can symbolise our care and open doors. Here are some thoughtful, non-toxic gift ideas.



Mother and Child Kit of Homeopathic Remedies, available to buy from www.ainsworths.com



Nipple Balm by Weleda – available in health shops and online. (Homemade versions can also be nice!)



Organic baby-gro and mini remedy kit from homeopath Mette Mitchell at www.homeopathyly.com.



Chicken stock (made by simmering organic raw carcasses in water for 2-3 hours) and soups made using fresh stock is deeply nourishing for nursing mums.

