

DR. CHRISTOPHER'S
Herbal Legacy Newsletter

Mastitis

September 23, 2009

What is Mastitis?

Mastitis is an inflammation of the breast most often occurring while a mother is breastfeeding. It is caused by blocked milk ducts and is relatively common. Mastitis usually happens when bacteria enter the breast through the nipple. This can happen when a nursing mother has a cracked or sore nipple. Another cause could be from engorgement which happens when the new milk comes in or when there is a long period between nursing and not enough milk is expressed from the breast.

Symptoms

Symptoms may include breast enlargement on one side only, breast lump, breast pain, fever and flu like symptoms including nausea and vomiting, itching, nipple discharge, swelling, tenderness, redness, and warmth in breast tissue, tender or enlarged lymph nodes in armpit on same side.

Avoiding Mastitis

To help avoid mastitis, make sure the baby is latched on properly when nursing to empty the breast completely and avoid cracked nipples.

Relief

Get plenty of rest and drink lots of fluids. Warm or cold packs on the painful breast helps bring relief. Place a warm wet washcloth over the affected breast for about 15 minutes. This increases the milk flow. Breastfeeding usually helps to clear up infection, and nursing while you have mastitis will not hurt the baby.

Herbal Help for Mastitis

For herbal help we turn to Dr. Christopher's Glandular Formula: three parts mullein to one part lobelia. Make a tea of this and use as a fomentation on the breast at night and use the oil or ointment during the day. The tea can be drunk - 1 cup three times a day. Also one would want to use herbs to fight infection: Echinacea and golden seal, the lymphatic formula, garlic, myrrh, etc. The herbs should be taken every hour or two to help get rid of the infection.

Get plenty of rest and eat a healthy diet of fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, nuts and seeds. Nursing is always the best thing for a new baby and its mother. It is a time to bond and relax and enjoy a newborn. Mastitis can be discouraging, but it is not a reason to quit breastfeeding if it is taken care of quickly.