

PEARLS

The Question:

I've heard it's impossible to get pregnant while breastfeeding. Is that true?

The Research:

According to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, breastfeeding is 98% effective as a natural contraceptive for up to six months after childbirth if your period has not returned. This method of birth control is called the Lactational Amenorrhea Method or LAM. LAM is most effective if you plan to breast feed for six months with feedings at least once every four hours during the day and every six hours during the night. You must breast feed almost exclusively with no more than 5-10% supplemental feedings. But even if you stick to a strict schedule, make no mistake - you can get pregnant while you are still nursing. In fact, some women begin ovulating, and thus can conceive, as soon as two weeks after giving birth even if they have not yet had a period.

Dr. Corio Says: Don't count on breastfeeding to prevent pregnancy. If you want to avoid becoming pregnant, use contraception.

The Question: What sorts of problems will I have when breast feeding?

The Research: The most common problem new mothers face is breast engorgement due to excess milk in the breast. An engorged breast feels swollen, hard, heavy and painful. Many women also experience sore or cracked nipples which comes from improper latching techniques; the baby bites the nipple without taking in the entire areola. Mastitis, or inflammation of the breast, is the result of a blocked milk duct and poor milk production are two other issues that we see in the office quite a lot.

Dr. Corio Says: In truth, most women experience no major problems with breastfeeding and for the most part what does occur is generally easily resolved. To overcome breast engorgement, simply express out some of the milk before feeding. You can ease the pain of sore nipples by rubbing a little breast milk on them or - I swear this works -- stuffing your bra with a cabbage leaf in each cup. If Mastitis occurs, call the office and make an appointment, especially if it is present for more than 3 days. If the inflammation produces discharge, breastfeed your baby with the other breast. A serious mastitis problem may end with a minor surgery. Never try to unplug the duct yourself! To increase milk production eat more protein-body-building foods, rich in vitamins, calcium and zinc, such as fish, red meat, chicken, beans, cereal, milk, fruits and vegetables.

Get More Info:

www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding
www.babycenter.com/breastfeeding-basics
www.llli.org
www.breastfeeding.com

Doctor & Office Hours

Doctors Hours

Monday 12:00 PM-6:00 PM
Tuesday 9:00 AM-3:00 PM
Wednesday 9:30 AM-2:30 PM
Thursday 8:00 AM-2:00 PM

Office Hours

Monday 10:00 AM-5:00 PM
Tuesday-Friday 9:00 AM-4:00 PM

Make an Appointment

Call 646-422-0730 during our normal office hours.



Tip of the month

According to a brand new study performed at Warwick University in London, the best way to fall in love with your beautiful new baby is by breastfeeding. In fact, the action of the baby suckling results in an incredible rush of oxytocin into the woman's brain, enhancing feelings of trust, love and affection while reducing fearful feelings. Oxytocin, also known as the love or cuddle hormone, is produced naturally in the hypothalamus - a part of the brain the size of an almond that controls body temperature, thirst, hunger, anger and tiredness. It's released during sex (or even when you're simply sexually attracted) and during labor when it triggers the production of breast milk. But when a mother breastfeeds, the floodgates really open and the few thousand brain cells capable of producing oxytocin send massive, intense, bursts of the hormone sweeping through the brain at intervals of around every five minutes - a rhythm established by the sucking patterns of the baby. The investigators say this is further proof breastfeeding is the fastest way for the mother to feel better after giving birth and a great strategy for beating post partum depression.