



## Notice

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## Health notes: Latch on to pain-free feeding

By [Sarah Stacey](#)

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Many new mothers find that breast-feeding doesn't come as naturally as they'd expected. When you have finally mastered the technique, you may have to cope with the common and painful problem of a blocked duct, which can lead on to mastitis, where the breast isn't draining properly and milk becomes stagnant. 'That can really test even the most dedicated mother's commitment to breast-feeding, but there are quite simple ways to manage it,' says Emma Cannon, the complementary women's health specialist whose devoted patients include Sophie Dahl and Eva Herzigova.

In her new book *You and Your Bump*, Emma leads readers through all the stages of motherhood, from pre-conception, via pregnancy and birth, to early motherhood, including breast-feeding. Here's her advice on treating blocked ducts and mastitis:

- A hard painful lump in your breast is probably a blocked duct; if a section of your breast is red, sore, hard and painful, more than one duct is involved and it may be mastitis.
- With either set of symptoms, consult your midwife, GP or breast-feeding nurse. The following tips should also help. (If you have mastitis, you may also need a course of antibiotics.)
- Apply heat to the affected breast, eg, a hot flannel, hot-water bottle, hot bath/shower, or a warmed wheat pack before and after feeding. Also, massage the affected area, circling gently with fingertips, to enhance drainage.
- Lay raw cabbage leaves on the tender breast to soothe and draw out infection.
- Rest is vital, so go to bed when your baby sleeps as much as you can. Mastitis is often caused by stress and overtiredness, so let family and friends help you.
- Check your breast-feeding technique with your midwife: mastitis can be caused by bacteria entering the breast due to cracked or sore nipples, so correct attachment is vital.
- Changing the position in which your baby is latched on can help: try pointing baby's chin to the tender breast to help drainage. This may mean some unusual positions such as lying down with your baby's body over your shoulder, toes by your ear.

- Put your baby to the affected breast every two to three hours, to help drain it. Mastitis may make your milk taste a bit salty so s/he may not feed so enthusiastically (although it's not harmful at all). If your breasts still feel full, express milk until it no longer flows, either by hand or with a good breast pump, and feed to your baby in a bottle. Look out for lots of clear urine and yellow stools to reassure yourself that your baby is getting enough nourishment.
- See an experienced, qualified acupuncturist (for local ones, visit [acupuncture.org.uk](http://acupuncture.org.uk)) as soon as possible.
- Make sure you have a well-fitting bra: one that's too tight can contribute to you developing mastitis. Choose cotton so that air can circulate.
- Don't use soap when washing your breasts as it dries out your skin.

*You and Your Bump* by Emma Cannon is published by Rodale, price £14.99. To order a copy for the special price of £12.99 with free p&p, contact the YOU bookshop on 0843 382 1111, [you-bookshop.co.uk](http://you-bookshop.co.uk)

## A PRICKLY PROBLEM SOLVED

Another practical reader tip to help prevent prickly heat. Valerie writes: 'After suffering for many years, I changed from a sun cream to a dry oil and have never had it since.' Try Hawaiian Tropic Protective Dry Oil Spray SPF20, from Boots stores and online at [boots.com](http://boots.com), £12.76 for 200ml. And please remember that car windows don't protect you from UVA rays. According to a report by Solar Gard ([solargard.co.uk](http://solargard.co.uk)), who make UV-rejecting window film, only eight per cent of people apply sun preps before a long car journey, so slop on the sunblock – even when it's a grey day (those rays penetrate cloud as well as glass).

## A NEW TRICK FOR OLD DOGS

Former Olympic swimmer David Wilkie, who pioneered the use of glucosamine supplements for joint problems after having benefited himself, has joined TV vet Joe Inglis to launch Active Joints for dogs, which includes glucosamine, chondroitin, collagen, hyaluronic acid and MSM (which provides sulphur). The Vet's Kitchen Active Sauces range also offers Healthy Digestion and Healthy Skin. Mollie, a nine-year-old black labrador with creaky knees, is trying out Active Joints for me now, so I'll report back.

£6.99 each from [petskitchen.co.uk](http://petskitchen.co.uk), with free UK delivery on orders over £30.

## Website of the week: [blood.co.uk](http://blood.co.uk)

Donating blood is as vital now as ever: the NHS needs 7,000 units a day to meet demand. Some years ago I needed five pints during surgery, so I feel a bit passionate about this. More information and how to make an appointment from this website, or call 0300 123 2323.

People:

[Sophie Dahl](#)

Places:

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[SMA Official Site](#) Free baby care advice from SMA. Join the know-how programme today! [www.smanutrition.co.uk/MilkOver55?EquityRelease](http://www.smanutrition.co.uk/MilkOver55?EquityRelease) No Monthly Repayments on £20k+ loan Own your home. Fixed interest

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