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# IOWA BREASTFEEDING HEALTH

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## Iowa Breastfeeding Coalition Newsletter

Developed for Health Professionals to Support Breastfeeding

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### Mission Statement

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Providing, promoting, and coordinating breastfeeding education, support, and evaluation through local coalitions, health care providers, educational institutions, and other interested individuals.

### IBC Goals

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1. Assure access to comprehensive, current, and culturally appropriate lactation care and services for all women, children, and families.
2. Ensure that breastfeeding is recognized as the normal and preferred method of feeding infants and young children.
3. Ensure that all state and local laws relating to child welfare and family law recognize and support the importance and practice of breastfeeding.
4. Increase protection, promotion, and support for breastfeeding mothers in the work force.

Information provided and distributed by the Iowa Breastfeeding Coalition.



### Join the Coalition

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Join the coalition to connect with other breastfeeding advocates across the state of Iowa! Membership runs from May to May. The coalition is a group of lactation consultants, counselors, educators and specialists, dietitians, nurses, health professionals, peer counselors, mothers and other interested individuals who are passionate about breastfeeding and want to promote and protect the rights of breastfeeding families in Iowa.

### Save the Date!

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Our fall IBC meeting will be on Tuesday, November 9<sup>th</sup> from 12:00-3:00 pm. In addition to our business meeting, we will have guest speaker Billie Jo Clausen, MS, IMHS-E presenting Social Emotional Learning 101: All About Attachment.

### Get Involved!

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Interested in becoming more involved in the coalition? Want to work on a breastfeeding project? Contact us for more details.  
[iowabreastfeedingcoalition@gmail.com](mailto:iowabreastfeedingcoalition@gmail.com)

### Iowa Breastfeeding Coalition Gear

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Check out our IBC merchandise! We have a variety of t-shirts and sweatshirts available to show your support of the coalition. <http://iabreastfeeding.org/store>



## IBC Board Members

*Co-Chair:*

Marieta Boberg,  
MS, RD, LD, IBCLC

*Co-Chair:*

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Nicole Newman,  
RD, LD, CLC

## Newsletter Editor

Angie Mach  
CLC

## Calendars

There is still plenty of time to order your IBC calendar. They run from July 2021- December 2022. They can be found at <http://iabreastfeeding.org/store>

## Invitation for Input!

Have a topic you would like to see in the newsletter? Submit it through the Contact Us section of the website. We'd love to spotlight some successes and accomplishments of our members.

## Identify the Issue

Written by Angela E. Bigler Swieter, RN, BSN, IBCLC, ICCE, owner of Basking Babies LLC

Challenge yourself and review your assessment skills by reading the clues and seeing if you can identify the issue most likely being described.

Your breastfeeding client is seven weeks postpartum. Breastfeeding had been going well.

She presents with:

- A painful white, clear or yellow dot on the nipple or areola
- The pain is at the dot area and just behind it.
- She reports that when she compresses the breast so milk is forced down the ducts, the blister will typically bulge outward.

Can you identify the issue?

## World Breastfeeding Week

World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) is a global campaign to raise the awareness and galvanise action on themes related to breastfeeding. It is celebrated every year during the first week of August (August 1-7) in commemoration of the 1990 Innocenti Declaration. [Link to Innocenti Declaration](#)

The Objectives for WBW 2021 were to

- Inform people about the importance of protecting breastfeeding
- Anchor breastfeeding support as a vital public health responsibility
- Engage with individuals and organizations for greater impact
- Galvanise action on protecting breastfeeding to improve public health

Visit the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) website [here](#) for more information.

## World Breastfeeding Week Happenings in Iowa



Governor Reynolds signed a proclamation declaring August 2021 as Breastfeeding Month in Iowa showing support for breastfeeding families across the state!

The Marion County WIC Program, Marion County Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program, Warren County Health Services, and the Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health Program partnered together to host two Game Nights during World Breastfeeding Week. The Warren County event was held at The Local Vine, and the Marion County event was held at Marion County Public Health Department. Several games were played, including breastfeeding bingo, the celebrity breastfeeding game, and breastfeeding trivia. Prizes and refreshments were provided and fun was had by all!

The Webster County Health Department WIC Program's Breastfeeding Peer Counselors created a bulletin board that promoted the benefits of breastfeeding to be displayed at the annual block party at the Community Health Center in Fort Dodge. WIC staff manned a table and gave away a diaper bag filled with baby items as a prize to a lucky winner.

The Southwest Iowa Breastfeeding Coalition and Pottawattamie County WIC Program hosted a Big Latch On event in Pott County in celebration of World Breastfeeding Week on August 6 and 7, 2021. The event was promoted at the coalition meeting, with flyers sent to coalition members, on the coalition Facebook, and in the WIC clinic. WIC breastfeeding experts and a Peer Counselor, along with other Southwest Iowa Breastfeeding Coalition members, attended the event to facilitate discussion and answer questions from the participants.

The American Home Finding Association WIC Program hosted an open house that was combined with a monthly breastfeeding support group and had a celebration with give-aways and snacks. Staff also celebrated World Breastfeeding Week by creating and wearing new shirts promoting breastfeeding throughout the month of August.

The Mother's Milk Bank of Iowa opened on August 1, 2002, the first day of World Breastfeeding Week. Here they are 19 years later continuing to applaud donor mothers and babies for their gifts of precious donor milk for babies who need it. This year they offered individually boxed cupcakes to local milk donors, recipient families, staff and anyone else who came to the milk bank during World Breastfeeding Week. As a part of the Johnson County Breastfeeding Coalition, they held their first event during World Breastfeeding Week. The milk bank registered the event with WABA and provided an informational booth at the Farmers Market that week. They were able to interact with families from the Johnson County community and spread awareness about resources for breastfeeding!

Pottawattamie County and MATURA WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counseling programs have been awarded the 2021 USDA Loving Support Premiere Award of Excellence! Awards are given at three levels of performance: Gold, Gold Premiere, and Gold Elite. Both of these programs were previously awarded the Gold award, and have now attained the next higher award, Premiere, which requires breastfeeding rates to be at a specific level and showing improvement. The Loving Support Award of Excellence program was established to recognize local WIC agencies that have provided exemplary breastfeeding promotion and support activities. The intent is to highlight successful models and motivate other local agencies to strengthen their breastfeeding promotion and support activities and ultimately increase breastfeeding initiation and duration rates among WIC participants. On August 9, 2021, Pottawattamie County WIC and MATURA were two of only six Premiere awards issued within the Midwest Region of seven states, and a total of 10 issued to WIC programs nationally.

In Scott County, the Maternal Health nurse from the Scott County Health Department organized a community resource event, including a diaper drive, on August 6. The local WIC agency participated in the event as well. They gave out information about the WIC Program, breastfeeding information, and promotion for World Breastfeeding Week.

Siouxland WIC Program made a bulletin board and placed it in the waiting area showing families from different cultures, gave a breastfeeding milestone charm bracelet to moms who had breastfed for one year, and collected pictures of moms and babies to post on the display board and social media sites.

MATURA's Breastfeeding Peer Counseling program hosted a Breastfeeding Trivia Night Thursday, August 5 at the Hot Air Brewery in Creston. The goal of this well attended event was to increase breastfeeding awareness and support in the community. Trivia included a breastfeeding category. Contributing to the fun – the names of the teams including irreverent and politically incorrect names as, "Witty Titties" and "The Good Latches." Creative cupcakes were also served.



The Johnson County Public Health WIC Program celebrated World Breastfeeding Week by setting up a station for WIC clients to take selfie photos holding signs promoting breastfeeding and shared them on the agency's Facebook and other social media platforms. They also provided members of the local breastfeeding coalition information on breastfeeding and the Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program to distribute at the Iowa City Farmers' Market.



Mid-Iowa Community Action WIC Program highlighted breastfeeding/pumping families that breastfeed and/or participate in the Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program on the bulletin boards in the Ames and Marshalltown clinics. During the month of August, WIC families (pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding families) had the opportunity to put their name into raffle prize bags and names were drawn at the end of August for prizes that were distributed. Pregnant and breastfeeding families that came to the clinic were given swag bags that included items such as World Breastfeeding Month promotion materials, breast milk cooler bags, breastfeeding covers/car seat covers, teething rings, and breastfeeding educational materials. Breastfeeding Peer Counselor participants received a water bottle in the mail with affirmation vinyl stickers to add to the outside of the water bottle.

The North Central Iowa Breastfeeding Coalition had a daily post on their FB page. The posts allowed the group to get to know each other better and to share how they have helped others with breastfeeding. The group was asked to share some about their own experience, including a breastfeeding selfie.

Basking Babies, LLC gave away an "Eat Local" onesie to one family each week in August. Basking Babies also had a newspaper article/interview in the Iowa Falls Times Citizen and had a radio interview with KLMJ radio station out of Hampton. You can find the article and recording of the interview at the links below. Read the article [HERE](#). To hear the sound clip [CLICK HERE](#).

The Breastfeeding Coalition of Polk County and Broadlawns WIC distributed over 500 breastfeeding promotion bags to 13 different locations in the Des Moines area including prenatal clinics and delivery hospitals. The breastfeeding bags will be given out to pregnant women and breastfeeding families at each location.

## Milestone Minutes

The first years of a child's life are the most important period of development physically, emotionally, cognitively and socially. The ways infants and children play, learn, speak, act, and move provide important clues about their development. Developmental milestones are things most children can do by a certain age and play an important role in infant feeding. The milestones are different for each age range and there is a normal range in which a child may reach each milestone.

For more information about developmental milestones visit [CDC's Developmental Milestones](#).

[CDC's Milestone Tracker App](#) tracks children's milestones from age 2 months to 5 years. Download it *free* on [iOS](#) and [Android](#) devices in English and [Spanish](#)!

4 month			
<b>Movement Milestones</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brings hand to mouth</li> <li>Holds on to and mouths objects</li> <li>Takes swipes at dangling objects with hands</li> <li>Grasps and shakes toys</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raises head and chest when lying on stomach</li> <li>Supports upper body with arms when lying on stomach</li> <li>Opens and shuts hands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stretches legs out and kicks when lying on stomach or back</li> <li>Pushes down on legs when feet are placed on a firm surface</li> </ul>
<b>Visual and Hearing Milestones</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Watches faces intently</li> <li>Follows moving objects</li> <li>Recognizes familiar objects and people at a distance</li> <li>Follows moving things with eyes from side to side</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Starts using hands and eyes in coordination</li> <li>Smiles at the sound of your voice</li> <li>Become alert to sounds by blinking or widening eyes</li> <li>Recognizes familiar people and things at a distance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Turns head toward direction of sound</li> <li>May be awakened by noise, become startled, or turn toward a sound to look for its source</li> </ul>
<b>Emotional Milestones</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Smiles when something pleasing happens, such as a belly tickle, and responds to affection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can differentiate other people's facial expressions of pleasure and disgust</li> <li>Gets excited when a caregiver approaches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will smile spontaneously</li> <li>Laughs, squeals, and blows bubbles</li> </ul>
<b>Social Milestones</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begins to develop a social smile</li> <li>Enjoys playing with other people and may cry when playing stops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Watches and responds appropriately to a sequence of events in interactions with others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Imitates some movements and facial expressions</li> <li>Initiates social interaction with coos or babbles</li> </ul>
<b>Communication Milestones</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prefer "baby talk" and voices with high pitch.</li> <li>Will quiet to their mothers' voices</li> <li>Babbles with expression to get your attention</li> <li>Stares at your mouth as you speak</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make cooing sounds, often vowel sounds such as "ah-ah-ah" or "ooh-ooh-ooh."</li> <li>Becomes more communicative and expressive with face and body</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At about 3 months, make cooing sounds back to someone who is talking to them</li> <li>Has different cries for hunger, tiredness, or pain</li> </ul>
<b>Cognitive Skills (Thinking, Learning, and Problem-solving)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is easily distracted by surroundings (for example, a baby that used to be focused on breastfeeding is now interrupted by the slightest noise)</li> <li>Grasps and examines own hands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Starts to predict routines (for example, stops crying when placed in a breastfeeding position or flexes hips in anticipation of a diaper change)</li> <li>Uses hands and eyes together, such as seeing a toy and reaching for it</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Repeats behaviors that produce a desired effect, such as batting a toy to move it</li> <li>Explores toys by grasping, mouthing, and looking at them</li> <li>Watches faces closely</li> </ul>
<b>Feeding Milestones</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gag reflex still present</li> <li>Shows regulation of intake of breastmilk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Watches people eating food*</li> <li>Reaches for food*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows better regulation with responsive feeding</li> </ul>

\*Note: Watching and reaching for food that other people are eating is often misinterpreted as readiness for introduction of solid foods, infants at this age have developed better attention, motor control, and vision that allows them to focus more on the world around them. Watching other people eat and interest in food is an indication of typical development rather than readiness to eat.

## Upcoming Events

### **In Person Conferences & Trainings:**

Basking Babies 2021 Conference  
November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021 8:30am-4:45pm  
<http://www.basking-babies.com/2021-conference-registration.html>

### **Online Conferences & Webinars:**

**Gold Learning Online Continuing Education**  
Lecture Library with individual lectures or bundles  
<https://www.goldlearning.com/ce-library/all-lectures>

**Great Lakes Breastfeeding Webinars**  
Michigan Breastfeeding Network, Free  
<https://www.mibreastfeeding.org/webinars/>

**USBC “Power Tools” Webinars**  
United States Breastfeeding Committee  
Bimonthly webinars, Free  
<http://www.usbreastfeeding.org/power-tools>

### **Online Lactation Education: 45-90 Hour Courses**

**Online Certified Lactation Specialist (CLS) Course**  
Online:  
November 1-5, 2021  
46 hours  
<https://lactationeducation.com/clsc>

**Lactation Education Counselor (LEC) Course**  
UC San Diego Extension  
Online 45 hour course offered every quarter  
<https://extension.ucsd.edu/courses-and-programs/lactation-education-counselor>

**Online Certified Lactation Counselor (CLC) Course**  
Online, 52 hours course, self-paced- have 6 months to complete  
[https://centerforbreastfeeding.org/register\\_lctc/](https://centerforbreastfeeding.org/register_lctc/)

**Lactation Education Program**  
Arizona State University  
Online, 90 hours, self-paced  
<https://courses.cpe.asu.edu/browse/nursing-health-innovation/courses/cpe-lac-101>

## Lactation Care Providers

There are many individuals who provide amazing breastfeeding support in our community. There are a wide variety of different credentials for lactation care providers. Thanks to the United States Lactation Consultant Association for permission to share the following 2 pages: Who’s Who? with information explaining the different lactation credentials.

# Who's Who?

## An at-a-glance look at lactation support in the United States

The U.S. Lactation Consultant Association (USLCA) exists to support the advancement of the lactation profession and lactation care providers for the health of families across the country.

Breastfeeding support ranges from basic encouragement and emotional support to guidance and assistance with complex clinical situations, all of which play a vital role in providing care to families. The varied categories of lactation care providers differ greatly in terms of training and experience. Recognizing these differences can be confusing to both families as well as allied healthcare team members. The descriptions in the chart below are a helpful aid in better understanding the categories of lactation care providers.

USLCA is an effective and leading national advocate for the lactation profession; a trusted source for information and education for professionals and families; and the organization where all members of the lactation provider community feel welcome and have the opportunity to network, learn and advance their careers. USLCA is founded on the belief that every family in every community should have access to breastfeeding support and care they need from experienced and qualified lactation care providers. For more information, visit [www.USLCA.org](http://www.USLCA.org).

Members of the lactation care community at every level dedicate their time, experience and expertise to the same goal: to provide families everywhere, regardless of circumstance, access to professional lactation care as a foundation for a lifetime of optimal health and wellness.

### Lactation Provider Categories

	Prerequisites	Training Required	Scope of Practice
<b>Consultant</b> <i>(International Board Certified Lactation Consultant, IBCLC®)</i>	Recognized health professional or satisfactory completion of collegiate level health sciences coursework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 90 hours of lactation-specific education</li> <li>• College level health science courses</li> <li>• 300-1000 clinical practice hours</li> <li>• Successful completion of a criterion-referenced exam offered by an independent international board of examiners.</li> </ul>	Provide professional, evidence based, clinical lactation management; educate families, health professionals and others about human lactation.
<b>Counselor/ Educator</b> <i>(i.e. Certified Lactation Counselor, Certified Breastfeeding Educator, etc.)</i>	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20-120 hours of classroom training</li> <li>• Often includes a written exam or "certification" offered by the training organization</li> </ul>	Provide education and guidance for families on basic breastfeeding issues.
<b>Peer</b> <i>(i.e. La Leche League, WIC Peer Counselor, etc.)</i>	Personal breastfeeding experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18-50 hours of classroom training</li> </ul>	Provide breastfeeding information, encouragement, and support to those in their community.



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# Lactation Care Provider Credentials

TITLE	TRAINING TIME	DESCRIPTION
International Board Certified Lactation Consultant® (IBCLC®)	90 hours lactation specific education, 300-1000 clinical practice hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 college level health professional courses (14 academic credits)</li> <li>• 6 health related continuing education courses,</li> <li>• Pass a criterion-reference exam</li> </ul> <p>The International Board Certified Lactation Consultant possesses the necessary skills, knowledge, and attitudes to provide quality breastfeeding assistance to babies and mothers. IBCLCs specialize in the clinical management of breastfeeding which includes: preventive healthcare, patient education, nutrition counseling, and therapeutic treatment. Source: <a href="https://ibclce.org/step-1-prepare-for-ibclc-certification/">https://ibclce.org/step-1-prepare-for-ibclc-certification/</a></p>
Certified Lactation Specialist Course (CLSC)	45 hours	Designed for the aspiring lactation consultant or nurses, physicians, midwives, dietitians, breastfeeding assistants or others desirous of improving their knowledge base and skills in working with the breastfeeding dyad. This certification is a stepping stone to the IBCLC credential. Source: <a href="https://lactationeducation.com/clsc">https://lactationeducation.com/clsc</a>
Certified Breastfeeding Specialist	45 or 90 hours	In operation since 1990, this evidence-based, online lactation management course covers up-to-date clinical best practices and all topics from the IBLCE Detailed Content Outline and LEAARC curriculum. This self-paced program is taught by 25+ experienced and dedicated lactation consultants, authors, researchers, and educators. Education is provided through webinars and interactive learning sessions. Both the 45 and 90 hour courses earn a Certified Breastfeeding Specialist certificate, to be used as a stepping stone to IBLCE certification. Source: <a href="http://www.lactationtraining.com">www.lactationtraining.com</a>
Lactation Educator Counselor	45 hours	This university based program trains participants to be Lactation Educator Counselors. Lactation Educator Counselors are typically entry level practitioners and deal primarily with the normal process of lactation. This course is the required prerequisite to the Lactation Consultant course. Source: <a href="http://breastfeeding-education.com/home/elec-2/">http://breastfeeding-education.com/home/elec-2/</a>
Breastfeeding Counselor (BFC)	10-14 months, Provide 30 hours of support	2-3 day workshop, self-evaluation, one written paper & case studies, read and review 5 books, submit one survey on breastfeeding support available in your community, open book online tests (multiple choice) to cover physiology & anatomy. Source: <a href="https://childbirthinternational.com/portfolio/breastfeeding-counselor-training/">https://childbirthinternational.com/portfolio/breastfeeding-counselor-training/</a>
Breastfeeding Educator Certification (BEC)	120 hours online training	Qualified to teach, support, and educate the public on breastfeeding and related issues and policies. Workbook activities, required reading materials, attend 8 breastfeeding meetings, research paper, submit a class presentation, work for clients in their community. Prepares for the IBCLC exam. 120 hours includes 50 hours of health science and 75 hours self-directed study/mentorship Source: <a href="http://www.birtharts.com/lactation-educator-certification.htm">www.birtharts.com/lactation-educator-certification.htm</a>
-Certified Lactation Counselor (CLC)	45 hours	"This comprehensive, evidence-based, breastfeeding management course includes practical skills, theoretical foundations and competency verification." Certification is accredited by the American National Standards Institute.
-Advanced Lactation Consultant (ALC)	90 hours	Some, but not all, certificate holders may have college level academic coursework. Some, but not all, certificate holders may demonstrate 150 hours of supervised clinical experience and a nursing or bachelor's degree.
-Advanced Nurse Lactation Consultant (ANLC)	90 hours	ANLC are licensed nurses as a pre-requisite to the examination. Source: <a href="https://www.alpp.org/">https://www.alpp.org/</a>
WIC Peer Counselor	30-50 hours, Varies by state, some states have quarterly training	Peer counselors are mothers who have personal experience with breastfeeding and are trained to provide basic breastfeeding information and support to other mothers with whom they share various characteristics, such as language, race/ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. In WIC, peer counselors are recruited and hired from WIC's target population of low-income women and undergo training to provide mother-to-mother support in group settings and one-to-one counseling through telephone calls or visits in the home, clinic, or hospital. Refer mothers to IBCLCs who have challenging questions and concerns. Source: <a href="https://wicbreastfeeding.fns.usda.gov/become-wic-peer-counselor">https://wicbreastfeeding.fns.usda.gov/become-wic-peer-counselor</a>
Certified Lactation Educator (CLE)	20 hours total, some have 8 hours clinical	Qualified to teach, support, and educate the public on breastfeeding and related issues. Complete course training, attend support group meetings, observe consultation or videos, review research studies and other requirements, including a test. Source: <a href="http://www.cappa.net/lactation-educator">http://www.cappa.net/lactation-educator</a>
La Leche League Leader (volunteer)	Training is self-paced. Usually 4-12 months.	Has successfully breastfed an infant for at least 12 months, is familiar with research and current findings dealing with breastfeeding, offers practical information and encouragement to nursing families from pregnancy through weaning via one-on-one help and monthly meetings. Includes 50 – 90 hours of guided study including communication skills and completion of a series of case studies based on common situations. Source: <a href="https://www.llli.org/get-involved/">https://www.llli.org/get-involved/</a>
Baby Café Breastfeeding Counselor (BCBC)	About 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A prescribed mentored curriculum volunteering at weekly Baby Café meetings for approx 100 meetings, with 30-60 hrs self-study</li> <li>• Usually an experienced breastfeeding mother with strong profession-oriented interest and links to the community</li> <li>• Has an understanding of national health-related impacts of breastfeeding and challenges mothers face in achieving breastfeeding goals</li> <li>• Demonstrates ability to offer routine lactation support; trouble shoots a wide variety of breastfeeding issues from newborn to weaning</li> </ul> <p>Source: <a href="http://www.babycafeusa.org/">http://www.babycafeusa.org/</a></p>
Breastfeeding for Professionals training	20 hours	This comprehensive 20 hour breastfeeding training is for any birth professional who assists new parents with their breastfeeding journey. Doulas, nurses, midwives, OBGYN's, childbirth educators etc. This interactive training covers all of the common concerns new parents have from latch, position issues, sore nipples, to thrush, mastitis, low supply and much more. We also address history, formula impacts, normal newborn behaviour, premies, medical issues and how to effectively counsel families. Source: <a href="https://honoringwomen.com/professional-trainings/breastfeeding-training/">https://honoringwomen.com/professional-trainings/breastfeeding-training/</a>

## Identify the Issue Answer:

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We are not making any diagnoses but it presents like a bleb.

What is a bleb?

- A bleb is sometimes called a milk blister, a blocked nipple pore, a nipple blister, or simply "milk under the skin".
- It is a painful white, clear or yellow dot on the nipple or areola, and the pain tends to be at the bleb spot and/or just behind it.
- If you compress the breast so milk is forced down the ducts, the blister will typically bulge outward.
- A bleb occurs later than the first few days after birth, and tends to come several weeks after the baby is born.
- If it is not painful no treatment may be needed and it will resolve on its own.

A bleb can occur when a tiny bit of skin overgrows a milk duct opening and milk backs up behind it. It also may occur because of an obstruction within the milk duct which is generally a tiny dry clump of hardened milk or a "string" of fattier, semi-solidified milk.

Some moms have said that a bleb is some of the worst pain they have ever experienced while breastfeeding. Many times these moms want to give up nursing.

Blebs can be present without a blocked duct, but if the pore stays plugged, it could block milk drainage and lead to a plugged duct and/or mastitis.

Some suggestions for mom could be:

The baby may be able to open or clear the bleb by nursing. Be sure baby has a correct latch.

Apply a cotton ball soaked with warm olive oil which can sometimes soften the bleb and make it easier for the let-down of milk to break through the skin that has overgrown the duct opening.

This cotton ball can be placed in the bra which will soften the skin and allow the mom to potentially remove the skin across the bleb area with her clean fingernail. She may then be able to hand express milk from the nipple pore. The milk expressed may be thick.

Watch the area closely so it does not "seal over" again and/or become infected.

Some moms have reported using grapefruit seed extract (GSE) and making a massage oil by adding a few drops of GSE into a small amount of olive oil and massage this into the nipple area.

Reducing saturated fats in mom's diet may help.

Occasionally a healthcare provider may need to open the bleb with a sterile needle, which is then washed with soap and water daily and an antibiotic ointment applied.

In many cases, working with an IBCLC to correct a shallow latch may be all that is needed.

These suggestions are remedies that work for some moms but they are not meant as a treatment plan for every situation. Care and support from an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant and/or mom's Healthcare Provider is always recommended.