

Breast Changes During Pregnancy

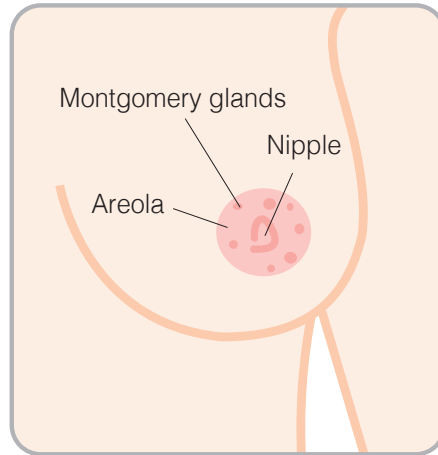
During pregnancy, hormones in your body are preparing your breasts for lactation. You may experience enlargement of the breasts, nipples and areolas. The breast tissue may extend up into the armpit, and some women may have additional breast tissue (accessory breast tissue) under the armpit.

You may find darkening of the nipples and areolas due to hormones that affect pigmentation of the skin.

You may also find veins along your breasts more noticeable due to increased blood supply to your breasts.

Small glands on the surface of the areolas called Montgomery's tubercles will become raised bumps.

Areola enlarged, nipple more sensitive



Tips

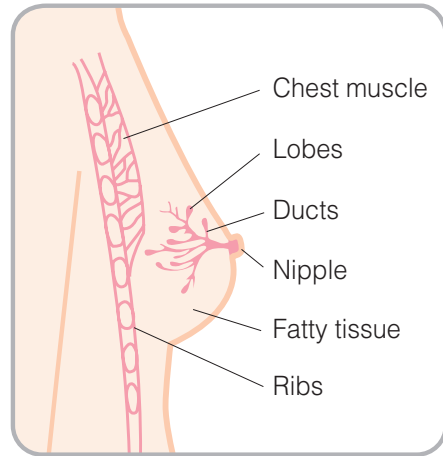
Your breasts will continue to grow throughout the pregnancy. This can cause discomfort and sometimes pain.

This can be helped by wearing a well-fitting bra.

You may need to change your bra to fit the growth of your breasts every trimester.

The milk ducts are growing and being stretched as they fill with milk early in pregnancy. All this causes your breasts to be more sensitive, particularly your nipples. This may cause you discomfort.

Anatomy of breast



Colostrum

Your breasts may start leaking a yellowish, thick substance known as colostrum. It can happen as early as 14 weeks into your pregnancy.

Women who do not experience colostrum secretion in pregnancy still produce milk for their baby after birth.

When should you seek medical care?

If you notice any of the following, it is advisable to seek medical advice:

- new lumps
- pain (especially if it locates at one place or gets worse)
- redness
- skin or nipple changes such as thickening, dimpling or ulcers
- any coloured substance (other than colostrum) from your nipple
- discrete lump in the armpit

(Please refer to the details of “Breast awareness” in FHS website at <http://s.fhs.gov.hk/7g38e>)