

## EARLY ASSESSMENT AND DIAGNOSIS OF POSTPARTUM MASTITIS

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### Abstract

Mastitis is an inflammatory condition that may be accompanied by infection of the breast that may occur in breastfeeding women during the puerperium and is reported in women who continue to breastfeed up to 6 months to 1 year after delivery. Puerperal mastitis may present as either an epidemic or endemic form. Epidemic mastitis occurs several days after delivery and is a hospital-acquired infection typically caused by virulent strains of *Staphylococcus aureus*. Infants are inoculated by personnel carrying *S. aureus* and transmit the bacteria to the breastfeeding mother through the nasopharynx. Improved nursery practices, including hand washing, have made epidemic mastitis a rare occurrence in developed countries. Endemic mastitis, however, remains a relatively frequent complication of breastfeeding. Endemic mastitis affects the periglandular connective tissue of the breast and is caused by inoculation of bacteria, either from the infant's nasopharynx or mother's skin, through cracked or fissured nipples during breastfeeding. Breast engorgement by milk stasis in postpartum women with milk over production usually causes pain and have tendency for inflammation consequently mastitis. In conclusion, early appreciation of milk stasis and breast inflammation of postpartum women is important of timely professional care of postpartum mastitis.

**Keywords:** *Mastitis, postpartum, inflammatory condition, nursery practice, professional care*