



If You've Had Surgery

I have just learned that I must have surgery a week from now. I'm afraid that breastfeeding will be too difficult during my recovery, and I'm thinking about weaning over the next seven days. Can I wean my baby in such a short time?



Few types of surgery require a woman to stop breastfeeding entirely. In cases that require a temporary interruption in breastfeeding, consider expressing breastmilk before the surgery and freezing it for your baby's use until you can resume nursing.

Abrupt weaning should be attempted only when no alternative presents itself. Apply cabbage leaves to your breasts to ease your discomfort. Your child may resist the accelerated pace, but you will at least have introduced her to alternative feeding possibilities before you wean completely.

Be sure to make time for a great deal of cuddling, playing, and other non-nursing-related contact to cushion any feelings of confusion your child may experience. Meanwhile, keep in mind your own need to adjust to this sudden change by easing breast engorgement and making allowances for hormonal and emotional fluctuations.

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Source New Mother's Guide to Breastfeeding, 2nd Edition (Copyright © 2011 American Academy of Pediatrics)

The information contained on this Web site should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.

