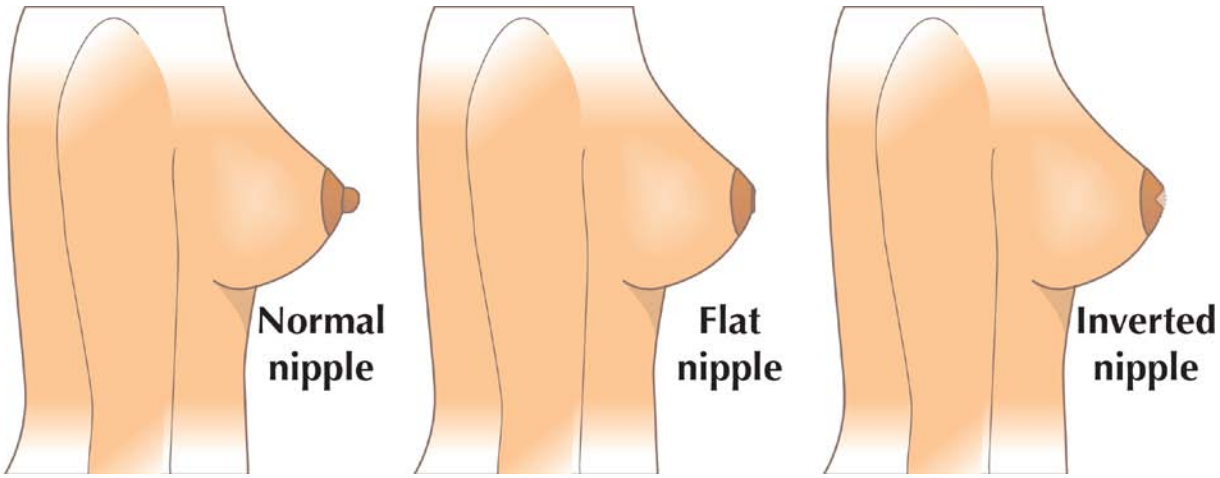
Do I have Flat or Inverted Nipples?

Flat or inverted nipples can sometimes be problems when starting to breastfeed. It is a good idea to know about your nipples before starting to breastfeed. These illustrations can help you determine what your nipples are like. There are three basic shapes.



Normal nipples:

These normally shaped nipples are easy for most babies to latch-on to. The nipple is erect at rest or becomes erect when it is stimulated or the mother is chilled. If you gently squeeze at the edge of this nipple it remains everted.

If, when you squeeze at the edge of the areola, the nipple flattens out or becomes inverted, follow the insturctions below.

Flat nipples:

This nipple can be difficult for an infant to attach to. It is flat and remains flat even when stimulated.

Occasionally lactation consultants recommend the use of breast shells prior to the baby's birth. They may suggest a breast pump just before feeding the baby to pull these nipples out for the baby. Check with your lactation consultant or knowledgeable health care provider to determine which solution will be best for your situation.

Inverted nipples:

These nipples actually retract at rest or when stimulated. Try gently squeezing at the edge of the areola. Usually these nipples remain inverted.

Occasionally lactation consultants recommend the use of breast shells prior to the baby's birth. They may suggest a breast pump just before feeding the baby to pull these nipples out for the baby. Check with your lactation consultant or knowledgeable health care provider to determine which solution will be best for your situation.

Please be aware that the information provided is intended solely for general educational and informational purposes only. It is neither intended nor implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice. Always seek the advice of your physician for any questions you may have regarding your medical condition. Never disregard professional medical advice or delay in seeking it because of something you have received in this program.