



Continuing Education Options for Healthcare Professionals

Presented by Melissa Cole, MS, IBCLC, RLC of Luna Lactation

Providing evidence-based, cutting-edge lactation education for healthcare and birth professionals is something Luna Lactation is passionate about. The field of lactation is constantly exploding with new research and care strategies. It is paramount that birth and healthcare professionals keep up-to-date with their lactation knowledge so they can best serve the families they care for. Our workshops, conferences and speaking engagements are always well-received and engaging. To learn about upcoming classes and workshops, you can subscribe to our newsletter, follow us on Facebook, or visit our website frequently. We have ongoing educational opportunities available and are happy to arrange customized in-services, trainings or lectures for your group. Please contact Luna Lactation with any inquiries.

More information on Melissa Cole's speaking engagements and availability located on LactSpeak at <http://lactspeak.com/melissacole/speaker/profile/>

About the Speaker

Melissa Cole, MS, IBCLC, RLC is a board-certified lactation consultant, neonatal oral-motor assessment professional, and clinical herbalist in private practice. Melissa is passionate about providing comprehensive, holistic lactation support, and improving the level of clinical lactation skills for health professionals. She enjoys teaching, researching and writing about wellness and lactation-related topics. Her bachelor's degree is in maternal/child health and lactation, and her master's degree is in therapeutic herbalism. Before pursuing her current path, Melissa's background was in education and cultural arts, which has served her well in her work as a lactation consultant and healthcare educator. She loves living, working and playing in the beautiful Pacific Northwest with her 3 children.



Professional Speakers
in the Field of Lactation

Available Presentations

This speaker is pleased to provide presentations on the following topics. Presentations on other topics may be available upon request and subject to sufficient development lead-time. *(For CERP topics, required paperwork will be provided promptly to meet CERP deadlines.)*

A Case Study Approach to Critical Thinking Skills for Lactation Professionals

There are many reasons infants struggle to latch and feed well. Critically thinking through a case involves assessing all the variables that may be impacting feedings. This is no easy task when we must consider what is happening on the parent's side and the infant's side. How can we put all the pieces of a complex case together in order to be an effective lactation detective? This session is designed to help providers implement critical thinking skills in order to think outside the box when it comes to difficult cases.

Session Objectives:

- Identify key aspects of the critical thinking process within the context of lactation
- Describe 3 infant-related factors to assess when feeding difficulties present
- Describe 3 parental related factors to assess when feeding difficulties present
- Identify the root cause(s) of the feeding issue at hand
- Identify personalized care plans strategies for a dyad
- Utilize critical thinking skills when supporting dyads through challenging feeding situations

Clinical Lactation Tools: Bottles, Tubes and Shields, Oh my!

There are many ways to love and feed a baby. Having in-depth knowledge about feeding-related tools should be a part of any lactation professional's toolbox. In this session we will review a variety of tools such as shield, supplemental feeding options, bottles, and more. Tools may be needed for a variety of reasons. We will explore critical thinking strategies for tool selection. Clinicians that have a strong foundation in feeding tools can often help family's find creative ways to meet their feeding goals faster than just a 'wait and see' approach. We will explore how certain tools fit, flow, work, and when to implement them. This session will have you re-thinking how you think about feeding tools and when to use them.

The Lactation Professional's Role in Supporting Optimal Healing Outcomes for the Newborn Post-Frenectomy

A hotly debated topic among clinicians is post-frenotomy care. There are a few emerging theories and clinical practice ideas when it comes to frenotomy aftercare for the newborn. Clinicians and families sometimes struggle with the idea of how to balance efficient post-frenotomy care while minimizing stress and discomfort of the newborn. While the evidence strongly points to the benefit of frenotomy for tongue-tied neonates, there is little published evidence regarding best aftercare practices. During this presentation we will explore the lactation consultant's role in supporting the family post-frenotomy. We will also discuss neonatal pain and pain management strategies and the impact of stress on wound healing. This presentation will help provide a well-rounded view of frenotomy aftercare strategies lactation professionals should consider when supporting families coping with post frenotomy concerns.

Note: This presentation could easily be expanded to a clinical practice day with actual post-frenotomy dyads.

Clinical Skills Workshop

Melissa is passionate about improving parental/infant assessment and clinical skills for lactation consultants and allied healthcare professionals. This clinical skills workshop focuses on working directly with parent/infant dyads. Traditionally, the hosting organizers will invite dyads from the community to come participate. Melissa will guide participants through an in-depth, comprehensive lactation consultation that involves parental/infant assessment and the formation of comprehensive clinical care plan. Participants will learn about advanced clinical assessment and care strategies. Melissa's goal for participants is that they view the feeding dyad holistically, looking at lactation issues from a physical and emotional perspective. Melissa firmly believes that excellent clinical skills must go hand-in-hand with excellent counseling skills in order for lactation professionals to truly make a difference.

Note: The clinical skills workshop is always well received. Participants gain valuable experience and knowledge observing and participating in the actual consultation process with real parents and infants. The clinical skills workshop is an excellent addition to a conference. Many conference organizers use it as an add-on day for participants that want more in-depth training from their conference experience.

Tongue and Lip Tie: A Comprehensive Approach to Assessment and Care

“Tongue tie” (clinically known as ankyloglossia) is of great interest in some settings and is still quite unknown in others. Tongue tie can restrict proper lingual functionality and mobility. These restrictions can cause significant feeding difficulties for infants. Feeding challenges can be complex and multi-factorial, therefore a comprehensive understanding of infant oral anatomy can help clinicians better assess and care for the patients they serve. The speaker will present on signs and symptoms of tongue tie, related health concerns, assessment and treatment strategies, and the status of the evidence base. This presentation is designed to meet the needs of anyone who clinically assesses infants, works with feeding issues, and/or provides lactation care.

Note: Melissa is a long-time member of several tongue tie professional groups and organizations. She has been working for years to increase awareness and professional standards around the topic of oral restrictions such as ankyloglossia. While tongue and lip tie issues have been somewhat of a hot topic in recent years, there is much more to the subject that needs to be discussed. Proper evaluation techniques, understanding oral anatomy and pre- and post-frenotomy support is vital in order for healthcare professionals to take their knowledge about tongue and lip tie to the next level.

Will it hurt? Frenotomy Aftercare Strategies to Optimize Healing Outcomes for the Newborn

There are a few emerging theories and clinical practice ideas when it comes to frenotomy aftercare for the newborn. Clinicians and families sometimes struggle with the idea of how to balance efficient post-frenotomy care while minimizing stress and discomfort of the newborn. While the evidence strongly points to the benefit of frenotomy for tongue-tied neonates, there is little published evidence regarding best aftercare practices. During this presentation we will explore the neonatal experience of pain along with pain management and oral healing strategies. We will also discuss the impact of stress on wound healing and focus on ways to help keep babies calm and happy through the recovery process. For families coping with a tongue-tied baby, it is often a physical and emotional roller coaster ride. This presentation will help provide a well-rounded view of frenotomy aftercare issues as well as clinical, care strategies to optimize healing and feeding for the newborn.

Connection and Care: Virtual Support for Tongue-Tied Infants

Providing virtual care has become a reality for many lactation professionals. How can we best consult families of tongue-tied babies virtually? How do we get the visual and functional information we need to guide our care when we are 'hands-off'? This session will discuss strategies for health professional working remotely including assessment, documentation, care plan formation, teamwork, and the referral process. While different than in-person consultations, virtual connection and excellent care for tongue-tied babies and their families is possible! Learning to adapt our practice style, gather information digitally, and pivot with the times is vital for our role in providing comprehensive lactation support virtually.

Lactation Intensive for Birth and Health Professionals

A one or two day intensive continuing education workshop designed for birth professionals and those involved in the parental-infant health community. The course is designed to update and enrich the professional's understanding of lactation issues and provide strategies useful in assisting the feeding dyad. Topics to be covered include: lactation concerns in pregnancy/birth/early postpartum, new thoughts on positioning and latch, milk supply and supplementation issues, nipple pain, holistic lactation care ideas, gut health, tongue tie and more.

Note: This workshop will present the most current updates in the field of lactation, allow time for case study review and provide attendees will receive ample resources that they can apply to their own practice. The presenter, Melissa Cole, is a well-respected lactation consultant and clinical instructor in the Portland area. One of Melissa's goals is to increase the standard of lactation care amongst allied health care providers and foster awareness regarding key clinical issues.

Lactation After Loss

After losing an infant, grieving parents may still have to cope with postpartum issues, including lactation. This presentation reviews and addresses care options for lactation concerns after pregnancy, neonatal, or infant loss. Currently, lactation care and advice after loss varies greatly. Lactation consultants are instrumental in providing parents with anticipatory guidance and evidence-based care. Implementing system-wide training and education regarding this topic will help families receive the information they need to deal with the physiological aftermath of infant loss.

Note: Melissa thoughtfully and comprehensively covers the topic of lactation care after perinatal, neonatal or infant loss. This presentation session is an excellent addition to conferences covering emotional, ethical and physiological lactation issues. This presentation is useful for healthcare professionals wishing to implement better policies in regards to lactation care after loss and allied providers wishing to improve their counseling and clinical skills in regards to supporting parents that have suffered infant loss.

Beyond the Basics of Latch: Support Strategies for Helping Babies When the Basics Aren't Enough

In a perfect world, every baby would latch beautifully right after delivery and feed happily ever after. In reality what we often see is that most moms and babies need a *little* help to get feeding off to a good start. Many dyads need *a lot* of help. And a few parent/baby pairs need a *miracle* to breastfeed successfully. How can we best help those tough cases? There are many reasons babies struggle to latch and feed well. Some issues may include structural issues, physical discomfort, respiratory concerns, medical issues, digestive issues, poor feeding tool choices, prematurity, and more. Many providers are frustrated when they are unable to help a dyad latch and feed successfully. Using case studies, we will review challenging situations and the assessment techniques and care plan strategies that helped. This session is designed to help providers implement critical thinking when it comes to difficult cases.

Common Infant Digestive Concerns: Dietary Sensitivities, Reflux and Beyond

This session will focus on common concerns regarding infant digestive health and useful support strategies that care providers can incorporate into their work with families. We will discuss what's normal and what's not in regard to stooling, spit up/reflux, colic/fussiness, food sensitivities, and more. Many parents are coping with babies that are uncomfortable and unhappy due to digestive health concerns. Dealing with a fussy, uncomfortable baby is emotionally and physically draining. Having a basic understanding of infant gut health and care strategies can be useful tools for any type of practitioner working with infants.

The presentation objectives include:

- Understand the physiological process of how allergens can pass from parent to baby
- Identify the differences between sensitivities and allergies
- Understand the development and importance of the neonatal enteric nervous system
- Identify care plan ideas for infants coping with digestive issues

Note: The topic of infant digestion is something parents and professionals alike are curious to know more about. Melissa explains the development of the digestive system and discusses gut healing and coping strategies for infants struggling with colic, reflux, food allergies, oral restrictions impacting proper swallowing, etc. Melissa is well-respected in her community and beyond for her work regarding infant gut health and digestion.

Beyond Fenugreek: An Individualized Approach to Herbal Galactagogues

While some clinicians might roll their eyes when 'lactation cookies' are mentioned we know foods and herbs have long been used to nourish the postpartum parent and enhance lactation. Some topics this talk aims to cover: Does nourishment matter when it comes to breastmilk quality or quantity? How can we approach galactagogues for lactating parents in an individualized way? How can clinicians evaluate evidence and determine safety regarding galactagogues? We know that parent coping with milk supply concerns are often desperate to 'try anything'. Clinicians have an important role in helping families understand the risks and benefits of galactagogues. By helping parents identify resources and information around foods and herbs, we can help empower them to make informed choices.

Objectives:

- Understand why foods and herbs may be needed to support optimal lactation
- Understand the different ways that galactagogues support lactation
- Understand a personalized approach to selecting appropriate galactagogues
- Locate resources on galactagogues and herbal safety

Note: This talk is a popular one and participants always come away learning something new. Foods and herbs for supporting lactation and wellness have a long-standing history. Participants will enjoy a colorful presentation that looks at galactogogues in an individualized way. Also, the foundational need for lactation support from a nutrition standpoint will also be covered. Conference attendees will enjoy hearing a fresh perspective on galactogogues!

Placenta Medicine as a Galactogogue: Tradition or Trend?

During this presentation, we aim to explore the fascinating topic of placentophagy. Our discussion focus will be on placenta medicine as a purported galactogogue. For some parents, insufficient milk supply impacts their ability to fully feed their infants. Many seek holistic options to increase their milk supply. Amongst some communities, placenta medicine and/or postpartum placenta consumption is a practice on the rise. What do we know about the benefits and risks of this practice? We will review historical and modern day evidence, the difference between mammalian and human placenta consumption, and discuss ethical considerations regarding placentophagy/placenta medicine as a galactogogue.

Herbal Support for Lactation and Infants

An intensive workshop designed for birth and health professionals and those involved in the parental-infant health community. The course is designed to enrich the professional's understanding of how herbs can be used for lactation and infant issues. Plant medicine around the world has traditionally been an important part of postpartum care for parents and babies. In this workshop, we will cover herbal care strategies for parental issues such as milk supply concerns, breast and nipple care ideas (engorgement, mastitis, sore/damaged nipples, etc). We will also discuss herbal support for infant issues such as digestive problems (colic, reflux, etc), teething, immune support, sleep, and more.

Oral Function: Assessment and Comprehensive Care for the Pre-Crawling Infant

This intensive workshop is designed for health professionals involved in the care of the pre-crawling infant. The course is designed to enhance the care provider's understanding, assessment and management of oral function issues as they impact infant feeding and development. We will have case studies, interactive virtual activities, group work, discussion time, and more. Melissa and Michelle will help you level-up your assessment and clinical care techniques when it comes to supporting babies coping with compromised oral function and complex feeding challenges.

Who should attend? Any provider that wishes to become a more skilled clinician when working with pre-crawling infants! Body workers, lactation consultants, pediatricians, physical/occupational therapists, nurses, registered dietitians, speech-language pathologists, and any care team member working with pre-crawling infants should consider attending. IBLCE continuing education credits included.

Infant Oral Assessment: Exploring Anatomy and Function Beyond the Frenulum

Is it a tongue tie? What else could be going on? Having a deeper understanding of the orofacial complex and functional oral motor patterns can help take your assessment techniques to the next level. Curious about jaws, tongues, palates, oral tone, suck patterns, and more? This presentation will focus on understanding the finer details and the bigger picture when it comes to infant oral assessment. We will cover the basics of infant oral anatomy, assessment techniques and optimal vs suboptimal movement, strength, and sucking patterns.

Objectives:

- Demonstrate the basics of infant oral anatomy assessment
- Describe immature vs. mature suck patterns
- Identify at least three aspects of oral assessment

Activities for Supporting Optimal Infant Oral Function

Lactation professionals have a duty to provide personalized care plan strategies as they relate to infant feeding and lactation. This lesson will cover exercises to support the jaw, cheeks, tongue, palate, lips, tongue. We will cover activities to support optimal oral function and sucking skills. Learners will also recognize oral function concerns that require referral and connection to other allied health professionals.

Session Objectives:

- Based on oral assessment findings, the clinician will be able to identify specific areas of infant oral function that may benefit from supportive exercises and activities
- Describe exercises and techniques that support function of the lips, jaw, cheeks, tongue, and sucking patterns
- Create a personalized neonatal oral exercise care plan

Prenatal Lactation Assessment and Support

This session will cover new thoughts on prenatal breast assessment and parental support strategies in the prenatal period. Health professionals working with parents in pregnancy have a unique chance to assess and discuss feeding questions and concerns with clients in the prenatal period. There are many factors that can impact lactation success including certain health concerns, medications, breast development, endocrine issues, etc. Parents appreciate having thoughtful insight regarding these issues prior to delivery. In my clinical experience a resounding theme when feeding issues arise from a condition that may have been identified prenatally is, "why didn't anyone tell me?" During this session, providers will learn how to assess breasts and nipples prenatally, identify potential red flags for lactation success and cultivate a meaningful dialog in order to discuss these concerns with the parents they serve.

Note: This is a very popular session for birth and health care professionals working with parents prenatally. So many times the only thing that gets asked of a mother prenatally in regards to feeding is, "how do you plan to feed your baby?" As professionals, we need to go beyond that and truly address potential lactation concerns in a meaningful way in order to empower parents and optimize lactation outcomes. The 'prenatal' part of the title can be included or omitted depending on your target audience.

Bodywork: Another Resource for Feeding Support

The purpose of this talk is to identify various types of manual therapy techniques that can support optimal feeding for the dyad. Bodywork is not a fad, cultures around the world have used manual therapy techniques to support well-being for more than 5000 years. Bodywork is a general term that describes a variety of therapeutic, hands-on modalities. Bodywork can be a resource for feeding support because it aims to address or physiological issues that may be impacting optimal feeding. Depending on the issue at hand, certain bodywork modalities may be more suited towards the problems than others. An overview of therapeutic techniques will be followed by actual case studies involving manual therapy as part of a care plan strategy to improve infant feeding issues. Presentation objectives include:

- Identify various types of bodywork that can be used to support feeding issues
- Assess basic aspects of anatomical structure and function that may impact feeding
- Comprehensively view structure as it impacts feeding ability and provide targeted care plan strategies
- Identify resources for pediatric bodywork, including literature and qualified practitioners.

Note: Infants can present with anatomical issues such as plagiocephaly and torticollis that can greatly impact their ability to feed successfully. Various types of manual therapies can assist in optimizing structure which in turn can optimize function in feeding for the newborn. Several parental breast issues may also be supported by manual therapy strategies. Practitioners will enjoy learning about the evidence around therapeutic intervention for feeding issues, learn ways to assess whether or not a feeding issue is stemming from structural causes, and discover how to create adequate care plan strategies and community resources that include bodywork.

Milk Production Detective Work: Assessment and Care Plan Considerations

Low milk production is one of the top areas of concern for families, and this presentation examines the various factors. Explore root causes of production issues, and hear specific and realistic recommendations. Work through interactive case studies, ramp up your critical-thinking skills, and improve your care plan strategies.

Session Objectives:

- Identify at least 3 reasons milk supply may be compromised
- Describe at least 3 diagnostic tools and assessment techniques for identifying low milk supply etiology
- Explain at least 3 ways to evaluate if care plan strategies are working for the supply optimization and the parent

NOTE: Presentations on other topics are available upon request and subject to sufficient development lead-time. (For CERP topics, required paperwork will be provided promptly).

Testimonials

“I just wanted to write an email as we are finishing up this course and congratulate you on a job well done. You are really doing such a great service, I love how you answer questions and help your students solve problems and get great quality information. So many ladies who are nursing use herbs and it is really awesome to see someone so competent training. It is great for me too. Lactation is not something that was thoroughly covered in any of my course work as deeply as other subjects and I am happy to take your course and I feel confident if something comes up contacting you for mentoring help since you work in this area so much.”

“Thank you for being so easy to work with. I have planned conferences for 40 years, and you made this new experience so easy! We really, really appreciate it!”

“Absolutely excellent!! So comprehensive, professional to the highest standard and a shining example of collaborative practice!”

“We want to express our sincere appreciation for all you did to help us make our 2020 conference a success. You were so instrumental in helping us make a “virtual reality”. Your kind nature and genuine personality made our organizers and attendees feel at ease. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed your presentations and live participation. Our only regret is not getting to meet you and share time together.”

“Thank you for the amazing class today. I love hearing you speak - always learn so much with your extensive, gentle and humble knowledge!”

“Excellent presentation!!! Best BF conference I have attended in a few years. Great slides. Loved the videos. Should be so helpful implementing this info in my practice. Thank you!”

“Melissa gave a first-class presentation that is useful for my continued professional development as a counselor, as well as an IBCLC.”

“Excellent presentation!!! Best BF conference I have attended in a few years. Great slides. Loved the videos. Should be so helpful implementing this info in my practice. Thank you!”

“This is the best local breastfeeding conference in YEARS! Outstanding. Thank you.”

“Wonderful, engaging, and interesting. I loved Melissa’s perspective, experience and openness to alternative therapies. Thank you!”

“Very helpful and also thought provoking. I will think about this issue differently in the future.”

“This conference was wonderful. Melissa Cole was terrific and presented material that is extremely applicable. I will be better able to assess tongue tie and gut issues. I am better able to ask the correct questions, develop a treatment plan, and figure out the referrals to be made.”

“The need for sensitivity was felt in Melissa's voice within the presentation - a role model of how to speak as well as what is most needed to be heard. Very well done. This will immediately be put to use. Thanks!”

“WONDERFUL SPEAKER!!! Helps with lactation consulting and caring for school aged children (I’m a school nurse too!). Loved the gut/digestive health concerns. Loved the assessment tools and Back to Basics Health Assessments. One of the best conferences I have been to!”

Publications

- Cole, M., Ligh, R. Q., & Liddicoat, M. (2023, October 27). Navigating post-frenectomy wound care. *Decisions in Dentistry*. <https://decisionsindentistry.com/article/navigating-post-frenectomy-wound-care/>
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- Cole, M. (2012). Lactation after Perinatal, Neonatal, or Infant Loss. *Clinical Lactation*, 3(3), 94-100.
- Cole, M., & Ghaheri, B. (2012, 11/19/12). The basics of tongue and lip tie: related issues, assessment and treatment, from <http://theleakyboob.com/2012/11/the-basics-of-tongue-and-lip-tie-related-issues-assessment-and-treatment/#comment-48837>
- Cole, M., & Ghaheri, B. (2012). General Information about Frenulum Procedures for the Infant.
- Ghaheri, B. A., Cole, M., & Mace, J. C. (2018). Revision Lingual Frenotomy Improves Patient-Reported Breastfeeding Outcomes: A Prospective Cohort Study. *Journal of human lactation: official journal of International Lactation Consultant Association*, 1(890334418775624), 0890334418775624.
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