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Mammary Epithelium

National Cancer Institute

Source

National Cancer Institute. *Mammary Epithelium*. NCI Thesaurus. Code C12937.

The epithelium that lines the lactiferous ducts and the secretory alveoli. The mammary epithelium in the lactiferous duct is a two layered epithelium. The basal cells are cuboidal and the superficial cells are columnar. Branches of the lactiferous duct are lined with a simple cuboidal epithelium. The secretory alveoli are lined by a cuboidal or columnar epithelium. During the first half of pregnancy, the epithelium undergoes considerable growth leading to the formation of new terminal branches of ducts and of alveoli. The mammary glands continue to grow during the second half of pregnancy due to increases in the height of epithelial cells and an expansion of the lumen of the alveoli.