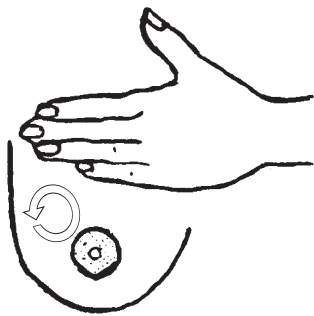


Breast Massage, Expression and 'Hands on' Pumping of Mother's Milk

Help your milk to flow by doing breast massage and hand expression. In the first 24 hours most mothers get small amounts of milk. Hand expression works better than using a pump during that time. By the end of the first 24 hours it is best to do breast massage, hand expression, breast compression and pumping. Doing this helps increase your milk supply. When you use both your hands and an electric pump it is called "hands on pumping". <http://newborns.stanford.edu/Breastfeeding/HandExpression.html> is a useful video to watch. It was made by Jane Morton. If your baby is in the BCW NICU you can watch the whole video by going to the link on the desk top on the computer in the parent lounge.

A. How do I do a breast massage?

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Relax, take deep breaths, and think positive thoughts about your baby.
4. **Massage** your breasts by:



- a) placing fingers at the top of the breast and firmly pressing them into the chest wall. Then move your fingers in a circular motion on one spot on the skin;
- b) after a few seconds, move to the next area, slowly moving around the breast. Continue to do this, moving closer to the brownish area which is called the areola.

Some mothers find warmth helps them relax. Try wrapping each breast in warm moist towels or disposable diaper for 10 minutes before expressing. Taking a bath or shower so the breasts are covered with warm water also helps. Heat helps the milk flow.



If your breasts have become hard, apply cold gel packs or compresses to help reduce swelling before and after massaging and expressing.

B. How do I do hand expression?

Hand expressing your milk takes time to learn. You will become successful. Massaging your breast, using moist heat or cuddling your baby skin-to-skin before you hand express will help. Before starting, get comfortable and take a moment to relax.



Push back against chest wall



1. Wash your hands with soap and water.
2. Gently rub your nipple.
3. Hold a clean container, cup or wide-mouthed jar under the nipple. If your baby is in the NICU use the sterile 'container' provided.
4. Cup the breast in one hand; and place your thumb and fore-finger about 2.5 cm to 4 cm or 1 to 1½ inches behind the nipple.

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Bring thumb & fingers together



Practice makes this easier



5. Press your fingers back toward the chest wall and then towards each other gently squeezing the thumb and finger together. Repeat rhythmically.
6. Rotate your hand to reach all around the areola. Change sides every few minutes, using one hand, then the other, on both breasts.
7. Express until no more milk comes out, at least 10 to 15 minutes each breast.
8. Express milk about every 3 hours if your baby is unable to nurse 8 or more times in 24 hours.

The first few times you may not get very much colostrum or milk and it may take you up to 45 minutes to express both breasts. After some practise you will be finished in 20 to 30 minutes.

C. How do I do 'hand's on' pumping?

"Hand's on" pumping means using your hands and the electric pump together. Each time you express and pump:

1. **Massage:** your breasts before expressing/pumping.
2. **Double Pump.** Pump both breasts at the same time for about 10 minutes
3. **Use compression and massage while pumping.** To hold the flanges of the pump in place, use a bra or have your partner help you. If you have no one to help, single pump and use your other hand to do compression and massage.
4. **Stop pumping:** once milk stops flowing and spraying.
5. **Massage** your breasts.
6. **Hand express** each breast. Switch back and forth letting the milk drop into the flange.
7. **Finish expressing** in a way that works for you. Either hand express or pump each breast.
8. **Hand express.** Feel for heavier areas in your breasts and massage those areas.

Develop your own method. Work from the outer area of your breast in or visa versa. You will discover what helps you get the most milk out. Ask for help.

How do I do compression?

Put your hand on your chest wall:

- cup your breast tissue and apply firm pressure but not hard enough to bruise!
- Slide your fingers towards your nipple.

Using compression while pumping helps get all the milk out of your breast. It also encourages your body to make more milk.

It's good to ask!