

Milk Expression

Your milk is very important to your baby. It is useful to express your milk if:

- your baby cannot feed at the breast
- you are away from your baby
- you want drops of milk to encourage your baby to suck,
- your breasts are overfull or you have a blocked duct,
- you want some hind milk to rub on sore nipples, and other reasons.

You can help your milk to flow by:

- sitting comfortably, relaxed and thinking about your baby,
- warming your breast,
- massaging or stroking your breast, and rolling your nipple between your fingers
- having your back massaged.

Feel back from your nipple to find a place where your breast feels different. This may feel like knots on a string or like peas in a pod. This is usually a good place to put pressure when expressing. Put your thumb on one side of the breast and 2-3 fingers opposite.



Compress the breast over the ducts. Try pressing your thumb and fingers back towards your chest, and then press your thumb and fingers towards each other, moving the milk towards the nipple. Release and repeat the pressure until the milk starts to come.



Repeat in all parts of the breast. Move your fingers around the breast to compress different ducts. Move to the other breast when the milk slows. Massage your breast occasionally as you move your hand around. If you are expressing to clear a blocked duct, you only need to express in the area that is blocked.

It takes practice to get large volumes of milk. First milk (colostrum) may only come in drops. These are precious to your baby.

How often to express depends on the reason for expressing. If your baby is very young and not feeding at the breast, you will need to express every 2-3 hours.

It is important to have clean hands and clean containers for the milk. Discuss milk storage if needed.

These points are suggestions not rules.

- Find what works best for you.
- Expressing should not hurt and to ask for help if it does.
- Ask if you have any questions.

You can get information or help from: