

Expressing Your Breast Milk



You can express or massage milk out of your breasts using your hands or a breast pump.

Massaging your breasts with your hands can get milk moving. It can make hand expression or pumping easier. The easiest way to get comfortable handling your breasts is in the bath or shower – you won't have to worry about leaking!

Massage:

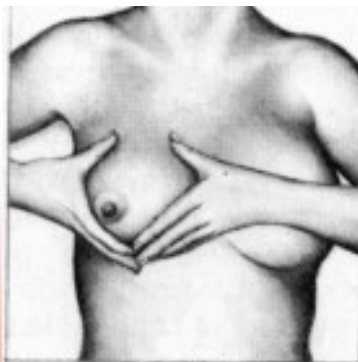
1. Place both hands around one breast.
2. Firmly massage with your fingers and thumbs.
3. Massage by making small circles on full-feeling areas and stroking toward the nipple.
4. Also massage up near the armpit where there might be some fullness.

My Milk Expressing Need:	Pump to Use
Pump once a day or less, baby breastfeeds most of the time	Hand Expression or a Manual Pump
Pump 2-3 times a day, while away from baby for work or school.	Single-User Electric Pump
Pump 6 – 8 times a day, baby in the hospital or not breastfeeding well	'Hospital-grade' Electric Pump

Hand Expression:

1. Wash your hands well with soap and warm water.
2. Cup your breast with the palm underneath and the thumb on top.
3. Push your fingers in towards your chest.
4. Squeeze the breast and roll the fingers forward, massaging out some milk.
5. Let the milk spray into a wide-mouth container, such as a bowl. Then, pour into your storage container.

As you continue to express, move your hand around the breast to squeeze on different areas. Milk comes out of the nipple from several openings at once – like a showerhead.



Choosing a Breastpump

Mothers who only need to express milk once in a while can manage without a pump. They use hand expression.

Not all breast pumps are the same quality. Those made by toy, bottle, or baby-food companies tend to not work as well. A higher price doesn't always mean a better pump, either. Ask your nutritionist, nurse or lactation consultant about the ones that are easiest to use and most comfortable.

Wait until after the baby is born before getting a breast pump. You might not even need it. If you do get a pump early, don't open the box until you're ready to start pumping (that way, you can return it if you don't need it).

Preparing to Pump

1. Wash your hands well with soap and warm water.
2. Use massage or warm cloths to get milk moving in the breast.
3. Think of your baby, and imagine milk flowing out of your breasts.

Pumping

1. Center the pump funnel ('flange') around the nipple.
2. Start on a low suction level with quick action to imitate baby's quick sucking at the start of a breastfeeding.
3. Gradually increase the suction to the highest level that is comfortable.
4. When milk begins to come out faster, slow down the speed of pumping to massage/squeeze the breast longer (to about 1 second per stroke).
 - o Plan on pumping for about 15 – 20 minutes on each breast.
 - o After pumping, your breast should feel much softer.

Practical Pumping Pointers

- When learning how to pump, practice with just one breast at a time.
- If your baby is full after feeding from just one breast, express milk from the other breast so it is not uncomfortably full.
- Most mothers don't get a lot of milk when they first are learning how to express milk. Practice makes perfect!
- Most women have their largest amount of milk in the breast in the early morning. This is the best time to get the most milk.
- If you'll be pumping at work or school, start practicing with the pump a couple of weeks before you go back. Set a schedule where you are pumping at home at the same time you might be able to pump while away. Freeze this milk to use later. Place the amount, in the milk storage bag or bottle used for storage, that the baby usually takes at a feeding.
- Thaw the frozen milk in a bowl of hot tap water. Do not BOIL WATER or USE A MICROWAVE. Bring the temperature of the thawed milk to room temperature.
- Gently shake milk to mix the creamy and watery parts together. Now it is ready to be fed to the baby.



Breastfeeding Welcome Here

For more information on breastfeeding, talk with your Nutritionist or Nurse and the Lactation Consultant at the hospital where you had your baby.