

The first 2 weeks of the postpartum (after delivery) period are a critical time in lactation. About 3-4 days after the baby is born, hormonal changes stimulate the breasts to produce larger amounts of milk. At this time, milk production continues to increase if milk is removed from your breasts frequently.

If your baby is having breastfeeding difficulties and is not able to empty your breasts with feedings at least every 2-3 hours it may prevent your breasts from producing sufficient amounts of milk. For this reason it is vital that you use a breast pump until your baby is able to feed well at the breast.

Where can I get a breast pump?

While you are in the hospital, your nurse will provide you with a breast pump kit to use with the hospital breast pumps. Most insurance companies are now covering personal use breast pumps for use at home. If you need a breast pump for home, please let your nurse know so she can coordinate the order before you are discharged.

How do I set up the breast pump?

- Wash your hands before touching pump parts or your breasts.
- Use new, clean collection bottles for each pumping session.
- While your baby is in the hospital use the small (80ml) milk storage bottles provided by the hospital.
- Screw the bottles directly onto the pump kit.
- Connect the tubing of the pump kit by inserting the connector into the receptacle on the pump.

How do I operate the breast pump?

- Pump both breasts at the same time. This decreases the time needed to pump and increases the hormone response, which may increase milk supply.
- Center the breast shields of the pump over each nipple.
 - Pump kits include the standard breast shields. If pumping is uncomfortable or you notice the nipple rubbing on the plastic, you might need a larger shield. Your nurse or lactation consultant can help you.
- Set the suction level at the lowest level when starting the pump. Gradually increase the suction until you feel a strong tug, but no pain. Your nurse or lactation consultant can recommend appropriate settings depending on the pump you are using.
- Pump until you no longer see milk dripping to make sure you remove all of the available milk. This will help to increase your supply.

If this is your first time pumping, limit your pumping session to 5-10 minutes. After that, pump both breasts for 15-20 minutes at least every 3 hours, or 8 times every 24 hours.

Additional tips:

- Add breast massage while pumping. This can help to remove more milk.
- Consider using a pump schedule to help keep you on track.

How much milk can I expect to get while pumping?

At birth, your baby's stomach is very small (about the size of a marble) so the early milk (colostrum) is produced in very small quantities. You may not get more than a few drops of colostrum the first 2 to 3 days while pumping, but this special milk is full of nutrients and antibodies for your baby. Be sure to talk to your baby's nurse about a plan for feeding your baby or storing the colostrum until your baby can be fed.

If your baby is not feeding well at the breast and you are mostly emptying your breasts by using a breast pump, you should expect to express the following milk amounts:

Days after delivery	Amount of milk
Day 0-2	about 30 ml. (1 oz.) per day (2-10 ml. -or- 1-2 teaspoons per feeding)
Day 3-7	350 ml. (11.5 oz) or more per day (30-45ml. -or- 1-2 ounces per feeding)
Day 7-14	500 - 1000 ml. (16.5 - 33 oz.) or more per day (50-150ml. -or- 2-4 ounces per feeding)

What do I do with the milk I get while pumping?

- Refrigerate the milk right away to ensure its safety.
- Clearly label the milk with the date and time it was expressed, and use the oldest milk first.
- If delivering breast milk to the hospital, clearly label each bottle with your **baby's name, registration number, date and time of pumping**. Your baby's nurse can provide you with printed labels as needed.
- Transport fresh cold milk in an insulated cooler bag. Bringing milk that is refrigerated and cooled is safer than bringing frozen milk to the hospital.
- If you do not plan to use the milk within 5 days, move it to the freezer for storage.

How do I care for the breast pump kit?

All breast pump parts that come in contact with breast milk must be cleaned after each use. Complete sterilization is not necessary to keep these parts safe and sanitary. You can thoroughly wash away germs and bacteria with liquid dish soap and warm water.

Do not clean the breast pump tubing unless it comes in contact with breast milk. If you wash your tubing, make sure it dries completely before attaching it to your breast pump. If moisture appears in the tubing after you have pumped, turn the pump on for a few minutes until the tubing is dry.

Do I need a hospital grade breast pump?

A personal use breast pump is fine to use for occasional absences from your baby, like when you return to work or school. If your baby is hospitalized, or unable to feed effectively at the breast for more than brief separations, you might consider renting a hospital grade breast pump.

What is hands-on pumping?

Expressing milk by hand is an effective technique for removing colostrum and increasing milk supply. You can view a demonstration of how to hand express at the following link:

<https://med.stanford.edu/newborns/professional-education/breastfeeding/hand-expressing-milk.html>

During your hospital stay, this video is available through the Get Well Network on your television. Search for the title, “Hands-On Pumping.”

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