

# How To Increase Your Milk Supply

## Ways to Increase Milk Production

Supply and demand is the biggest factor that affects milk supply. This means the more milk your baby removes from your breast or the more milk you remove by pumping (demand), the more milk you will produce (supply).

To increase your milk supply, try the following:

- Give your baby more skin-to-skin time.
- Give your baby unlimited time at your breast if your baby is nursing well and it is comfortable for you.
- If your baby is not removing milk efficiently, use a breast pump for at least 15 minutes after every attempt at nursing. See a lactation consultant for latching help.
- Massage your breast before nursing or pumping.
- Try breast compression while your baby is nursing.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Relax.
- Schedule a visit with a lactation consultant if you need more information.

## Using Herbs

For many years, mothers in cultures around the world have been given traditional food and herbs to try to increase their breastmilk production.

Herbs used to increase a mother's milk supply are called galactagogues (gal-act-ah-gahgs).

Much is known about herbs and breastfeeding but there is a lack of scientific studies to suggest their safety and how well they work.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not need to give approval to an herb. Each herbal maker is responsible for the safety of its product.

Some herbs may affect how well other medicine you are taking may work. As with medicine, herbs may have side effects.

## If You Would Like to Try a Galactagogue

Talk with a lactation consultant before you take any herbs on your own. A lactation consultant is familiar with herbs and can talk with you about your options.

The consultant can also help you decide what questions to ask your health care provider or pharmacist about the galactagogues you are considering.

Before you begin taking any galactagogues, please talk with your health care provider or pharmacist. He or she can make sure there is no concern with the herbs and any other medicines or supplements you are taking.

## Resources

- "The Breastfeeding Mother's Guide to Making More Milk," by Diana West and Lisa Marasco
- "The Nursing Mother's Herbal," by Sheila Humphrey