

Hand Expressing Breastmilk

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Hand expression can be used:

- to get colostrum for your baby in the first 2 to 3 days of his or her life
- to relieve engorgement
- in place of a breast pump when one is not available
- along with using an electric pump to help increase your overall supply.

How to Express Your Breastmilk

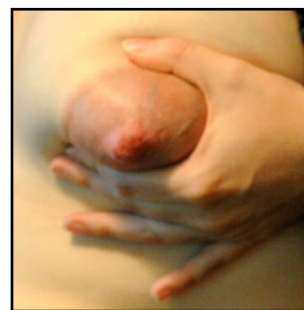
- Wash your hands.
- Help your milk let down by first massaging or stroking your breast. (See photo A.) Avoid sliding your hand over your breast down to the nipple. This can cause skin irritation.
- Place your hand on your breast with your fingers 1 to 1 ½ inches behind the nipple. (See photo B.)
- Push straight back into the chest wall without spreading your fingers. If your breasts are large, lift your breast and then push. (See photo C.)
- Gently compress (squeeze) the areola in one motion. Do not pull your nipple out.
- Repeat in a rhythm: position fingers, push in, compress and release. Position, push in, compress and release.
- Expressing should be comfortable.
- When you no longer get milk, rotate your thumb and fingers.
- Switch back and forth from breast to breast.



A. Position for massage.



B. How to place your hand.



C. Gently push straight back.



D. Gently compress, then collect the breastmilk.

- Collect the breastmilk in a clean cup, spoon or other clean container. (See photo D.)

Resources

Here are two websites you can visit to view videos on hand expression.

- newborns.stanford.edu/breastfeeding
 - Click on “Breastfeeding.”
 - Select *Hand Expressing Milk*.
- bfmedneo.com
 - Click on *Breast Massage Video*.