



Information for Breastfeeding Families

Hands-On Pumping

Using a breast pump is important if your baby is ill, premature, or unable to feed directly at the breast for any reason. You will obtain more milk from the pumping session if you use breast massage at the same time. You will have more milk to save for feedings, and your milk supply will increase.

Begin pumping as soon as possible. You may have the most success if you pump or hand express within the first six hours after birth; ideally within the first hour.

- Use a hospital grade double electric pump if at all possible.
- While a rigid schedule is not necessary, milk should be removed at least 8x per day to maintain supply.
- **Assure the flanges are appropriate size:**
 - Nipple moves freely in and out during suction cycle
 - Breasts are “emptied” completely, no areas of lumps.
 - No indentation ring from the flange after pumping.
- Wear a bra or bustier that will hold the flanges in place while you pump so your hands can be free for massaging.
- Start with slow massage to stimulate let-down.
- Apply the breast pump and use the maximum suction level that is comfortable, not painful.
- Watch the sprays of milk and adjust hand position to where milk flows the most easily.
- When the sprays of milk subside, switch to single pumping so you can be more vigorous with the massage.
- When the sprays of milk subside again, turn off the pump and hand massage into the pump flange.
- Some mothers can double their output this way.
- Pay special attention to remove milk from the outer margins toward the armpits area.



[Watch this video while you are pumping!](#)