

Further information

If you have any questions please speak to the neonatal nurse or midwife or ask to speak to the Specialist Midwife Infant Feeding Coordinator.

Breastfeeding helplines and websites

National Breastfeeding helpline: 0300 100 0212

Association of Breastfeeding Mothers 0300 330 5453

www.abm.me.uk

Breastfeeding Network www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk

La Leche League: 0345 120 2918 www.laleche.org.uk

References: Images from 'Off to the best start' (2015). For a full list of references contact the Specialist Midwife Infant Feeding Coordinator.

If you would like to give feedback on this leaflet please contact the Specialist Midwife Infant Feeding Coordinator.

The Trust endeavours to ensure that the information given here is accurate and impartial.

If you require this information in another language, large print, audio (CD or tape) or braille, please email the Patient Information team at patient.information@ulh.nhs.uk

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Issued: May 2020
Review: May 2022
ULHT-LFT-3240 Version 1



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Expressing milk for your baby on the Neonatal Unit

- Top tips for expressing
- Information on hand and pump expression
- Expressing log

Baby's Name _____

DOB _____

Neonates and Maternity

Pilgrim Hospital 01205 445404

Lincoln County Hospital 01522 573604

www.ulh.nhs.uk

Top Tips for Expressing

Why provide breastmilk for your baby on the Neonatal unit?

The importance of breastmilk cannot be overestimated; it helps growth, reduces risk of infections and serious bowel inflammation. Breastmilk is easier for babies to digest. It helps brain and eye development and reduces risk of diabetes, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), heart disease, asthma and childhood obesity. Providing breastmilk is healthiest for your baby and something special only you can do.

Getting started with providing your breastmilk

If your baby is not able to breastfeed yet, your milk can be collected by expressing. The first milk in your breasts, colostrum, comes in very small amounts, so hand expression works best at first. Aim to try to hand express as soon as possible after the birth, within 1 hour is best, but if that is not possible, try to express within 6 hours of the birth.

Hygiene note

Remember to always wash your hands before expressing.

Before expressing

Your body has a reflex called a 'let down' which helps the milk to flow. To get a 'let down' before expressing try:

- Massaging your breast gently for a few minutes.
- Being close to your baby.
- Looking at a picture of your baby.
- Smelling your baby's clothes, blanket or a bonding square.



How to hand express

- Cup your breast and place your thumb and finger in a 'C' shape about 2 to 3 cm from the base of your nipple.
- Compress and release in a rhythm.

Expressing log

	Day 15				Day 16			
	Date:				Date:			
	Time started	Volume expressed		Total Volume	Time started	Volume expressed		Total Volume
Left Breast		Right Breast	Left Breast			Right Breast		
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								
	24 hour amount expressed:				24 hour amount expressed:			
Diary:				Diary:				

Expressing log

	Day 13				Day 14			
	Date:				Date:			
	Time started	Volume expressed		Total Volume	Time started	Volume expressed		Total Volume
Left Breast		Right Breast	Left Breast			Right Breast		
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								
	24 hour amount expressed:				24 hour amount expressed:			
Diary:				Diary:				

Top Tips for Expressing

How to hand express (continued)

- It might take a few minutes for the milk to appear.
- If milk does not drip/flow after a few minutes, try moving your fingers slightly further away or towards the nipple and try again.
- Avoid sliding your fingers along the skin as this tends to block the milk ducts.
- Collect the milk in a syringe or pot.
- When the milk slows down, move your fingers round to express a different section of your breast by compressing and releasing again.
- Repeat on the other breast.
- Remember our staff are available to support you with expressing.



When to use a breast pump

- It is best to wait to use a breast pump until the milk volume increases. This is because the valuable first milk, colostrum, is produced in small amounts and it can get stuck in the breast pump kit.
- Once the milk volume increases to about 10 ml per expression, a breast pump can be useful.
- For mothers with a baby on the Neonatal Unit, it can be useful to stimulate milk supply by using the pump on the 'initiate' setting **after** hand expression - a staff member will advise you on using this setting.

Top Tips for Expressing

How to use a breast pump

- A staff member will show you how to assemble the pump kits and use the breast pump.
- Remember to massage to stimulate the milk flow before using the pump in the same way as for hand expressing.
- Place the shields over the breasts and press start, after two minutes the suction changes to a slower and stronger pattern. At this time you can gradually increase the suction to the maximum that is comfortable for you.
- Express until the milk stops flowing freely, the amount of time this takes is different for each mother and expression.
- Expressing both breasts together will save you time and usually gets a better milk flow.
- To ensure comfort when expressing ensure the nipples are in the centre of the shields so they don't rub. There are different breast shield sizes, so you may need to try a different size if the shields are uncomfortable.

What to expect when expressing

The first milk in your breasts, colostrum, is produced in small amounts so colostrum syringes can be used to collect this milk. This milk is special as it is high in protein and antibodies.

Breastmilk supply gradually increases in the first 10 to 14 days. Breastmilk continues to have high levels of antibodies but also provides fluids, fats and sugars as the amount of breastmilk increases.

By day 10, aim to express 750 ml per baby in each 24 hours. Once this volume is reached, it is considered a full supply.

Expressing log

	Date: Day 11				Date: Day 12				
	Time started	Volume expressed		Total Volume	Time started	Volume expressed		Total Volume	
		Left Breast	Right Breast			Left Breast	Right Breast		
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									
10									
11									
12									
	24 hour amount expressed:				24 hour amount expressed:				
Diary:					Diary:				

Expressing log

	Day 9				Day 10			
	Date:				Date:			
	Time started	Volume expressed		Total Volume	Time started	Volume expressed		Total Volume
Left Breast		Right Breast	Left Breast			Right Breast		
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								
	24 hour amount expressed:				24 hour amount expressed:			
Diary:				Diary:				

Top Tips for Expressing

Tips on maximising breastmilk production

- Try to start expressing as soon as you are able after baby's birth.
- Express at least 8 to 10 times in 24 hours.
- Remember to express during the night between 12 am to 6 am, when the breastmilk production hormone is higher.
- Skin to skin contact – lots of skin to skin stimulates milk production and calms and comforts your baby.
- Massaging or compressing the breasts during expressing helps milk flow.
- You can be flexible about when you express – for example express in clusters (2 or 3 times close together) so you can have a longer rest but avoid gaps of longer than 4 hours in the day and 6 hours in the night.
- Double pumping is more effective and saves time.
- Once your breasts are producing more milk they should feel softer after expressing.

Cleaning, sterilising and labelling

Have a discussion with staff members about cleaning and sterilising the expressing equipment and labelling your milk.

Breastmilk storage

Once breastmilk is expressed, it can be kept at room temperature if it will be given to the baby within 5 hours. If the breastmilk will be used later it should be refrigerated or frozen. In the hospital we keep breastmilk for up to 48 hours in the fridge and 3 months in the freezer. When you go home breastmilk can be kept for 5 days in the fridge and 6 months in a deep freezer.

Top Tips for Expressing

Expressing support

It is a good idea to discuss how expressing is going with the neonatal nurse or midwife who is looking after you and your baby. Regular discussions can help to ensure you have all the support you need to get your breastmilk supply established.

We value any breastmilk you provide for your baby, no matter what volume.

When babies are born early or sick, there are often a lot of challenges to establishing a full supply of breastmilk. Even small volumes of breastmilk will help protect your baby's health and you should be proud of whatever you can provide.

If you have any worries or concerns about expressing or breastfeeding your baby, remember you are not alone and your nurse/midwife are happy to help.

Expressing log

Keeping a log is a good way of helping you to keep track of expressing. We have provided some pages in this booklet for you to record how expressing is going. You can use this log when discussing expressing with your midwife or neonatal nurse.

There is a diary at the bottom of each page where you can write anything you like. You might write baby was in skin to skin, licked at your nipple, nuzzled your breast - whatever you feel is helpful.

If you need extra pages, just let your midwife or neonatal nurse know.

Expressing log

	Day 7				Day 8				
	Date:				Date:				
	Time started	Volume expressed		Total Volume	Time started	Volume expressed		Total Volume	
Left Breast		Right Breast	Left Breast			Right Breast			
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									
10									
11									
12									
	24 hour amount expressed:				24 hour amount expressed:				
Diary:					Diary:				

Expressing log

	Day 5				Day 6			
	Date:				Date:			
	Time started	Volume expressed		Total Volume	Time started	Volume expressed		Total Volume
Left Breast		Right Breast	Left Breast			Right Breast		
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								
	24 hour amount expressed:				24 hour amount expressed:			
Diary:				Diary:				

Top Tips for Expressing

Pump loan service

At United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust, we have electric breast pumps that we can loan when your baby is on the Neonatal Unit, so that you can use the same type of breast pump when you are in the hospital and at home.

These pumps can be borrowed while your baby is in hospital and usually the loan can be continued until your baby is getting all of their feeds at the breast. Ask your neonatal nurse for information about borrowing one of our breast pumps.

Moving on to breastfeeding

Holding your baby near the breast when baby is getting milk can help baby to associate the breast with feeds. Skin to skin with your baby on your chest is a good way to begin.

Encouraging your baby to lick and nuzzle the breast also helps. You can also express some of your milk into your baby's mouth when baby starts going to the breast. It is normal for it to take time for your baby to learn to breastfeed, so it's important to be patient and keep trying.

Supporting close and loving relationships

We encourage all parents to respond to their baby to promote close and loving relationships. Stroking, comforting, holding and talking to your baby are good for your baby's development.

Skin to skin contact with your baby is a lovely way to provide your baby with comfort and security and can be done for all babies regardless of how your baby is fed.

Expressing log

	Day 1				Day 2			
	Date:				Date:			
	Time started	Volume expressed		Total Volume	Time started	Volume expressed		Total Volume
Left Breast		Right Breast	Left Breast			Right Breast		
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								
	24 hour amount expressed:				24 hour amount expressed:			
Diary:				Diary:				

Expressing log

	Day 3				Day 4			
	Date:				Date:			
	Time started	Volume expressed		Total Volume	Time started	Volume expressed		Total Volume
Left Breast		Right Breast	Left Breast			Right Breast		
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								
	24 hour amount expressed:				24 hour amount expressed:			
Diary:				Diary:				